

THE LIVING AGE.

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{ From Beginning
Vol. CXXLIH. }

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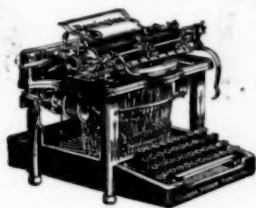
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FROM BEGINNING
Vol. CCXLIII.

FRANCE AND THE VATICAN.*

"Who would have thought," said an acute observer early in the present Pontificate, "that we should so soon have had occasion to regret Leo XIII.?" The regret was entertained on public, not on private grounds. As a man Pius X. is the more attractive figure; and, personally, his popularity is greater than that of his predecessor, whose long-expected death came to the Church as in many respects a relief. The almost unprecedented length of the Pontificate had created a sense of weariness: the cards, it was felt, had become monotonous; it was time for a new deal. That the Pope had been a politician was not objected to him: the Papacy is a political institution. What was objected to him was that his policy had been a failure. "C'est peut-être la plus grande gloire de ce pontificat que d'avoir opposé à la Triple une duplice franco-russe" is the

judgment of a recent critic. The glory is equivocal. So far neither of the two Powers has taken much by the alliance; and the Pope's aim in working for it, the recovery of the temporal power, seemed more distant at his death than at his accession. The Republic proved intractable: its attitude towards Italy was friendly; its relations with the Church and the Holy See were strained. The Conclave of 1903 reproduced the existing political divisions of Europe; the interests represented in it were, on the one hand, those of the Franco-Russian, on the other, those of the Triple Alliance. The pro-French cardinals largely outnumbered those of the opposite party. The policy of Leo XIII. was not meant for, and cannot be judged by, his lifetime only; few know how carefully prepared a scheme was shattered by the Austrian Veto, which fell like a

* 1. "Concordat ou Séparation." Par Georges Noblemoine. Paris: Librairie Plon. 1904.

2. "Le Parti Noir." Par Anatole France. Paris: Société nouvelle de librairie et d'édition. 1904.

3. "Le Libéralisme." Par Emile Faguet. Paris: Société française d'imprimerie et de librairie. 1904.

4. "La Réforme intellectuelle du clergé." Par P. Saintyès. Paris: E. Nourry. 1904.

5. "Un dernier Gallican: Henri Bernier." Par A. Houtin. Paris: E. Nourry. 1904.

6. "Pourquoi les catholiques ont perdu la bataille." Par l'abbé Naudet. Paris: Aux bureaux de la "Justice Sociale." 1904.

bolt from the blue. The protagonist retired—it must be allowed—with dignity, and from the chaos of conflicting groups and interests new and unforeseen combinations emerged. Why did not the cardinals defy a veto the lawfulness of which was doubtful, and which it would have been impossible to enforce? Or why, on the withdrawal of their original candidate, did not the majority elect one of their own number? The explanation is that the Sacred College was singularly wanting in men of ability and strength of character; never had its reputation stood so low. Arbitrary, and impatient of opposition, the late Pope had looked to acquiescence rather than intelligent co-operation in his counsellors, and bestowed the purple on instruments, not men. The natural consequence followed. The Conclave, composed with few exceptions of cyphers, was less a deliberative assembly than a voting machine, liable to break down under any sudden strain on its equilibrium, and the unexpectedness of the Veto put it out of gear. "*Effeminati dominabuntur eis.*" Had the cardinals been men of Rampolla's calibre, things would have turned out differently. But the powerful Secretary had overreached himself. The one thing upon which neither he nor anyone else had calculated took place, and the labor of years collapsed like a bubble. The rival parties split into sections. The French Monarchists, whose recognition of the Republic has never been more than nominal, clamored for a change of policy; the foreign cardinals, less absorbed than their Roman colleagues in the pursuit of the shadowy Pontifical sovereignty, inclined to a religious Pope. In France, the Associations Law of 1901 had provoked the hostility of an active and unscrupulous party, whose influence at Rome, always considerable, had become dominant during the last years of Leo XIII.; German

diplomacy, fishing, as its custom is, in troubled waters, contrasted the humiliation of dependence on changing parliamentary majorities with the solid advantages of an understanding with the stable military monarchy beyond the Rhine. Better relations with Austria, the hereditary ally of the Papacy, were desirable; the *Los von Rom* movement had been strengthened by the resentment felt at the "colossal ingratitude" of the Vatican during the late Pontificate; and, though to stand well with Berlin and Vienna a certain change of front towards the Savoy Monarchy was necessary, the Italian cardinals outside the Curia were not disinclined to the change. Knowing better than the Curialists the temper of the country, they had endured rather than approved of the prolonged deadlock, and for the most part desired a *modus vivendi* with the existing régime. Causes such as these, and the necessity for immediate action, which made protracted negotiations impossible, led to the passing over of more than one likely candidate. The *Papabili* left the Conclave cardinals; the Patriarch of Venice, of whom scarcely anyone, himself least of all, had thought, came out Pope.

Though not personally a politician, he had been a reserve candidate of the opposition, or anti-French, cardinals. He was the most colorless, politically, on their list; but, being in a minority, they could only hope to carry the election by a surprise vote, and had every reason to congratulate themselves. The new Pope was a stranger to Rome, his acquaintance with it scarcely extending beyond the formal visits *ad limina* obligatory on a bishop; to not a few of the electors he was unknown even by sight. He represented the Italian Episcopate rather than the Roman Curia. His relations, indeed, with the latter had been less than cordial, exception having been taken in high

quarters to his participation on more than one occasion in the welcome given by the Venetians to the late and the present King. A peasant by birth, he possessed the qualities of his class: he was tenacious of purpose, his shrewdness was considerable, his sense sound. But his education had been that of a country priest; the acquired and artificially cultivated ignorance of the seminary hampered his naturally good judgment; he stood outside the opinion and knowledge of his time. In this, indeed, he was not singular: the ignorance of the Roman official world must be experienced to be believed. But it is tempered by an experience—a traditional statecraft, a gift for dealing with men and affairs—in which he was wanting. A man of principle rather than of expedients, compromise was foreign to him; the opportunist temper of Rome was not his. Hence the paradox, not to say the tragedy, of his Pontificate—that, disclaiming political aims, he is embroiled in a vortex of politics; that, personally humble and unassuming, he bids fair to become the Hildebrand of modern Popes. It is David in Saul's armor. The sword of the mighty is two-edged, and recoils on the unwary; he is cumbered by the unaccustomed gear. Conscious of his incapacity, his reluctance to undertake the exalted office to which the vote of the Conclave called him was sincere. But it was difficult, impossible almost, to refuse; the heavier the burden, the more imperative the obligation to bear it if bidden; unwillingly, but without grudging or reservation, he followed what he believed to be a Divine call.

The change of personal atmosphere was unmistakable. Leo XIII. had been egotistic, harsh, a stickler for etiquette; he had been admired, feared, respected, rather than beloved. Pius X. is what the Italians call *simpatico*; considerate, kindly, averse to ceremonial, willing to be seen and addressed by

all. By heart as well as birth an Italian, his country is dear to him: from the first he spoke of the widowed Queen-Mother with sympathy, and of the Sovereign with respect. The *métier* of a Grand Lama was distasteful to him; he dispensed as far as possible with guards and chamberlains; he invited his friends to his simple table; he preached to the people—generations had passed since a Pope had dreamed of such a thing; his easy ways and direct speech won the heart of Rome. The Vatican was less friendly. There his origin was resented. He was neither Roman nor a noble; his Italian sympathies found no echo; his homely ways scandalized those accustomed to the formalism of his predecessor's Court. It is said, perhaps not without truth, that his virtues are rather personal than official; that he is a better bishop than Pope. The routine work of the Roman Congregation is so vast, and so technical, that it is a drawback for a Pope not to have had personal experience of it; hence the impossibility, under existing circumstances, of a non-Italian, and the disadvantage of a non-Roman, Pontiff. The questions of policy which come before the Holy See are so intricate and so many-sided that they demand the knowledge of a specialist and the judgment of a man of affairs. These Pius X. does not possess. It was of the first importance, consequently, that his Secretary of State should be a man of experience, resourceful, patient, large of view. Under Leo XIII. the office had been filled by the one man of first-rate ability in the Sacred College. But it was impossible that Cardinal Rampolla should be invited to direct the policy of the new reign. Identified, rightly or wrongly, with that of the old, and on Leo's death all but his successor, his retirement was inevitable; and it was in the interest both of the new order of things, and of his own future, that

it should be complete. The name of more than one prominent cardinal was suggested; it was hoped by many that the choice might fall on Cardinal Serafino Vannutelli, a Roman, a diplomatist, a man of traditional type and official training. It was not to be. As Secretary to the Conclave, Mgr. Raphael Merry del Val had been brought into intimate contact with the new Pope, to whom he was recommended by his reputation for piety, his acquaintance with the principal European languages—the Pope knowing only Italian—and his engaging manners. He enjoyed the support of a powerful religious order: in a few weeks' time he was made Cardinal and Secretary of State. "*Diabolus stet a dextris ejus.*" The appointment was in every way regrettable: from the first the Secretary has been the evil genius of Pius X. He was not a Roman, or even an Italian: a fashionable director, especially of women, among the foreign colony, neither by temperament nor training was he fitted for duties which brought him into contact with interests of another order than that of the sacristy, and into relation with men of a larger world than his own. A Spaniard by birth, he belonged to the strictest sect of Clerical and Legitimist orthodoxy; nor had his partly English education been such as either to enlarge his sympathies or widen his mind. A pupil of the Jesuits, he possessed at once the virtues and the vices of that famous order: he made no secret of his hostility to the House of Savoy and the New Italy, or of his hatred of Liberalism—that temper as difficult to define as it is easy to recognize—in every department of knowledge and in every quarter of the globe. Such was the successor of Rampolla. If the impenetrable ex-Minister permits himself in his privacy to drop the mask which he has trained himself to assume till it has become second nature to him,

he must smile at the irony of fate. Two other Spaniards—the Capuchin Cardinal Vives y Tuto, and the General of the Jesuits—make up the inner Cabinet: hence the notes of its policy—its high-handedness, its want of insight, its narrowness of outlook. The Roman spirit has its defects, moral and intellectual: encroaching, astute, unscrupulous, it minds earthly things. But, on its own ground at least, it is sagacious, practical, far-seeing—in a word, all that the diplomacy of the present Pontificate is not.

That with such advisers the Pope should have exhibited, personally if not officially, a conciliatory temper towards the Italian Government argues that where he has sufficient knowledge of the facts of a case his judgment is to be relied upon. But with regard to how few of the matters which come before him can he acquire this knowledge or form this judgment! Infallibility is a legal fiction. Imposing as a theory, attempt to apply it, and it escapes you. A theologian justified his acceptance of the Definition of 1870 by the cynical argument, "*C'est plutôt absurde que faux.*" Like other officials, the Pope is dependent on the information given him: according to its quality he is well or ill advised.

If ever a Pope had need of accurate information and prudent counsel, that Pope is Pius X. Never was the incompatibility between Catholicism, as a polity, and society more palpable; never was the opposition between Catholic teaching, as commonly presented, and science more radical or more widely felt. This incompatibility and this opposition have reached their climax in France. And this for two reasons. Of all European peoples, the French are the most intelligent, the most open to ideas. Without the thoroughness of the German or the practical sense of the English mind, the French excels the former in quickness and the latter in versatility; it rep-

resents an element in life and knowledge with which civilization could ill dispense. The influence of France, indeed, requires to be balanced by other influences, but to injure France is to lessen the intelligence and lower the vitality of mankind. Especially has this been so since the fall of the Empire gave free play to the genius of the nation, which is at once pacific and progressive. Neither its men nor its measures are beyond criticism; but, with all the defects of both, the Third Republic has a stability which is wanting to more apparently stable Governments, because it has entered definitely upon the lines on which human progress is destined to advance. Hence the accentuation of the gulf between Catholicism and society, a clerical theocracy and the modern State. On one question after another—education, marriage, association, &c.—their interests came into conflict. But over and above these several issues is the essential difference of purpose and conception: the former exists for a class, the latter for the community; the former looks back, the latter, on. On the other hand, the ties that bind France to Latin Christianity, are ancient and intimate: the designation "Most Christian" attached to the sovereign, and "Eldest daughter of the Church" to the nation, represents facts too vital to the past to be meaningless for the present. Catholicism embodies the French, as distinctively as Protestantism the German, spirit. And in each case the relation is reciprocal. "*Ce que je constate est que, dans le monde entier, la France c'est le catholicisme,*" says M. Brunetière. The phrase, rhetorical as it is, contains a truth. Protestantism without Germany, Catholicism without France—here, as there, the soul would lack its embodiment.

Leo XIII., with the instinct of a statesman, saw this: Pius X. is blind to it. Hence the essential opposition be-

tween the two Pontificates. In spite of difficulties with and rebuffs from successive Ministries, Leo XIII. kept peace with France. He did his best, if that best was little, to restrain the internecine war between the factions that distract the French Church; aware that the maintenance of the *status quo* was the condition of the welfare—perhaps of the existence—of religion, no price, he felt, was too high to secure it; the abolition of the Concordat was an evil to be avoided at every sacrifice and at all costs. His policy was more successful than it appeared to be, or than, perhaps, he knew. It failed in its immediate purpose. The Republic remained anti-Clerical; its support in the domestic quarrel between the Vatican and the Quirinal was not obtained. But the rupture on which a less sagacious Pope might have rushed was averted, at least for the time. And to have gained time was much. To-morrow new developments may present themselves and new possibilities arise. Both the virtues and the limitations of Pius X. disinclined him from following his predecessor's lead. He inaugurated his reign by an emphatic repudiation of political aims and interests. "*Instaurare omnia in Christo*" was to be the watchword: the Church was a religious, not a political, society; he would be a religious, not a political, Pope. Alas for the futility of human intentions! This attitude, however desirable in itself, is impossible. The history and genius of Rome—let us be just, the practical requirements of the Church at large—are against it; a Pope can no more dispense with politics than a bishop or parish priest with finance. The question is not, Shall he have a policy?—this is inevitable, but, Shall his policy be just and enlightened? Shall the means taken to realize it be adapted to their end? The Allocution of November 3, 1903, disavowed, almost in terms, the

Encyclical "E supremi Apostolatus cathedra;" Pius X. has as distinct a policy as Leo XIII. With regard to Italy, a certain vacillation may be detected, the Encyclical and the Allocution, Bologna and Bergamo, striking a different note. The aim of the power, personal or impersonal, behind the Pope seems to be to make his acts of friendliness individual rather than official, and so to facilitate a change of attitude should circumstances demand it. But the broad lines are clear enough. Those who criticise the Pope's policy as uncertain overlook the obvious fact that it is, in substance, that of the group of cardinals which elected him—conciliatory to the Powers constituting the Triple Alliance; hostile to France.

It would be doing Pius X. an injustice to suppose that this is the result of conscious purpose on his part. He is in an exceptional degree the creature and victim of circumstances. Everything is against him: his seminary training, his provincialism, his seclusion from the free air of the world. France—her people, her history, her language even—is strange to him: he sees "men as trees, walking"; he misconceives the situation with which he has to deal. He sees, because he is prepared to see it, an atheist ministry kept in power by the vote of a godless majority; persecuted religious—gulleless Jesuits and peace-loving Assumptionists; secularism rampart in the schools; unbelief, in the shape of criticism, invading the clergy: religion attacked from without and from within. And his singleness of purpose forbids him to take into account the motives of prudence that would have weighed with his predecessor: he is for rebuilding the walls of Jerusalem, sword as well as trowel in hand.

But what are the facts? The Law of 1901 closed the question of authorization—"la nécessité, pour les congrégations, d'une autorization; la perma-

nence du contrôle de l'Etat est une doctrine aussi ancienne que les Etats organisés eux-mêmes; jamais elle n'a été délaissée." This statement, which is that of M. Waldeck-Rousseau, is historically unquestionable; nor will any French lawyer dispute the principle which underlies the fact. Successive administrations, however, had been lax in applying it: of the numerous congregations which, especially since 1870, had sprung up like mushrooms not one in ten had complied with the requirements of the law. Opportunities have not been wanting on which, had they applied for authorization, it would have been granted; in 1880, had they acted on the advice of the Nuncio, and joined in a declaration of loyalty to the institutions of the country, they might have acquired legal standing. They refused; and, under the circumstances, the refusal was equivalent to a declaration of war not only against the Republic but against the State. Warned in 1898 of the impending legislation, they hardened their hearts. They depended, they answered, on the Pope, not on the Government; to apply to the latter to legalize their position would be to give to Cæsar the things that were God's. The Law of 1901 gave the alternative of authorization or dissolution. Many chose the latter; and the submission of those who at the eleventh hour retreated from a position which they found untenable was badly received. Irritated by their long resistance, and taught by experience to see in their policy and existence a menace to society, the attitude of the Chamber was hostile. The congregations, as such, were suspect. Of the unauthorized orders of men six only obtained authorization; the tardy demands of the majority were rejected without examination and *en bloc*. That the innocent suffered with the guilty is probable. "Tu l'as voulu, Georges Dandin." To associate oneself with

evildoers is to share their ill repute, and often their fall.

The Law of 1904 suppressed the teaching orders—with two exceptions—the maximum of respite being fixed at ten years. Their schools are to be closed as the local authorities can replace them; and, where the communes have suitable premises at their disposal, there has been little delay in the substitution of public for private instruction. Denominational schools, however, are permitted, provided that their staff does not consist of persons actually members of religious orders; and in many places the religious have secularized themselves, and so retained their schools. So frequently is this the case that the law, as it stands, has become a dead letter, the Government conniving at its evasion. In the case of mixed—i.e. partly teaching, partly charitable or contemplative—orders a recent decision of the tribunal of Troyes removes them, in so far as they are non-teaching, from its jurisdiction, nor is the Minister of Public Worship opposed to this liberal interpretation of the law.

It is not necessary to defend the action of the Government in detail. The principle of the Associations Laws of 1901 and 1904 is open to objection: "Toute loi doit être impersonnelle, et une bonne loi n'a pas dû atteindre les congrégations comme telles, mais les abus commis par les congrégations." It would have been well, as M. Waldeck-Rousseau urged, had they been administered with discrimination; "il ne fallait pas transformer une loi de contrôle en loi d'exclusion." The action of the executive has been occasionally harsh, and even provocative—in particular, the removal of the crucifixes from the law courts was a measure at once odious and ill advised. The omission of the Cardinal Secretary's letter of June 10 from the correspondence published in the "Journal Officiel" was

fatuous—"on a fait acte de polémique, non de documentation," said the "Temps" justly: nothing but the certainty of detection can be urged in defence of those responsible against a charge of bad faith.

But a policy must be judged as a whole. And the insignificance of the opposition, both in the Chamber and the country, shows that the nation, which is not at heart irreligious, views it with approval. The explanation is that in France society is faced by a peril of which in this country we have, happily, no experience: a politico-religious party—a minority, indeed, but an influential and unscrupulous minority, whose aim is the destruction, not merely of the existing form of government, but of the foundations on which the modern State is built. The Syllabus and the State are incompatibles. And not a word of the Syllabus has been, or will be, withdrawn. Under the restored Bourbons this party terrorized the nation: "I had rather see the most godless republic than a return to that state of things," said Vallant in the sixties, "though I believe that not a sparrow falls to the ground without God's will." It rallied to the *Coup d'état*; it conspired with Boulanger and Esterhazy: nine-tenths of what passes as anti-clericalism is hatred, not of religion, but of the interference of a mischievous and meddlesome priesthood in public and private life. And for the remaining tenth, how much of the responsibility rests with those who have identified religion with all that is least respectable in opinion and least social in conduct? "Ce sont des lamentables: ils ont défiguré l'Evangile de paix. Le confondra-t-on avec l'Eglise, ce parti misérable qui eût fait du monde un eunuque sans cerveau ni cœur?" The confusion is not unnatural: the conquest of Latin Christianity by what Cardinal Newman denounced as "an insolent and aggressive faction"

is complete. Bowing themselves in the house of Rimmon, its opponents exist precariously and on sufferance. For the temper and methods of the dominant sect the English reader may be referred to the Abbé Houtin's "Question Biblique," "L'Américanisme," and "Un dernier Gallican: Henri Bernier": it is by turns truculent and intriguing, offensive and obsequious, a mixture of Torquemada and Tartuffe. The results achieved in France were summed up by Montalembert: "De tous les mystères que présente en si grand nombre l'histoire de l'Eglise, je n'en connais pas qui égale ou dépasse cette transformation si prompte et si complète de la France catholique en une basse-cour de l'anticamera du Vatican." If the community has not asserted itself sooner and more vigorously, the reason is that in France anti-Clericalism is as great a danger to the public peace as Clericalism; threatened by two Terrors, a Red and a Black, the State plays off one against the other, and so keeps both in hand.

This is the key to the religious situation. The relation of the Centre to the Extreme Left is that of English Liberalism of the Palmerstonian period to its Radical wing: the Socialist vote is necessary to the Government, but the concessions made to Socialism are more apparent than real. The secular clergy has been unmolested; the members of the dissolved congregations, abandoning their distinctive dress and style, have, as has been said, in many cases returned to their occupations. The outcry of the expelled religious resembles that of our Passive Resisters—there is an element of comic opera in the proceedings both of the victims and the agents of the law. Nor have the attempts of the former to turn the tables on their opponents been happy. That the Carthusians should have been willing to wound M. Combes is not surprising: monks are men. But that they

should have been afraid to strike—that, when called upon to prove the charges with which they have allowed themselves to be identified, they should have taken refuge in silence—this, if it does not throw suspicion on their good faith, suggests at least that their wish to believe was stronger than were their grounds for believing: the inevitable inference is that they were silent because they had nothing to say.

Hatred, however, breeds hatred; nothing but the watchfulness of the civil power restrains the rival factions; the presence of the gendarme, like that of the Turkish guard in the Holy Sepulchre, is the condition and guarantee of order. The extremists on each side are few; but the matter is inflammable: at any moment a spark might kindle a fire. The country has suffered too much from the excesses of contending fanaticisms to risk their repetition; and recent events have shown that the danger is not one of the past. There are spirits in France to-day as murderous as Ravallac and as turbulent as the Guises. Hence the acquiescence of the nation in measures which, in the interests of public security, withdraw certain classes of citizens from the common law, placing them, as our own Mutiny Act does, under exceptional legislation. Various explanations of this acquiescence have been suggested: Masonic terrorism, Jewish conspiracy, Protestant and foreign intrigue. It is not necessary to go so far afield. The average French elector knows his own business. With Catholicism as a religion he has no great quarrel—"tous les anti-cléricaux et tous les non-pratiquants ne sont pas pour cela en rupture de christianisme"—but Catholicism as a polity he will have none of. He prefers the Government of M. Combes, with all its shortcomings, to a Nationalist Administration inspired by the "Libre Parole" and the

"Vérité Française," and dictated to by M. Drumont and M. de Mun.

That in the present state of tension the question of the Concordat should have been raised is to be regretted. That those who are animated by hatred of religion should desire its repeal is natural; the amazing thing is that the Vatican should be found playing into their hands. The Cardinal Secretary is said to be acquainted with five languages; that of diplomacy, it seems, is not one of their number. It is impossible for any self-respecting Government to overlook the incident of the Identical Note—which was not identical; the proceedings against the Bishops of Laval and Dijon, whatever their inner history, have been conducted with a high-handedness calculated, if not designed, to provoke reprisals. Events have moved, and are moving, quickly: it is impossible not to fear that the rupture of diplomatic relations between France and the Holy See is the prelude to the separation of Church and State. Moderate men of every shade of religious and political opinion look with dismay on the prospect: the episcopate, the ministry, the majority of the Chamber and the Senate, the sense of the country at large—all point the other way. But it would be unwise to trust to this average of opinion, reasoned and practically unanimous as it is. A determined minority has been able before now to precipitate matters and force its will on a reluctant majority: there is a tide in human affairs which carries with it the folly of the multitude and the wisdom of the wise.

In "Concordat ou Séparation," to which M. Ribot, an ex-premier, contributes a weighty preface, the questions at issue are discussed from the standpoint of a *rallié*. The book is not free from bias. The "Bloc" is not the ogre that the author conceives it: "ceux qui nous ont engagés dans la

politique actuelle contre les congrégations ne sont pas si pressés que vous paraissent le croire de supprimer tous les rapports entre l'Eglise et l'Etat," M. Ribot reminds him: nor are the organizers of Nationalist agitation the victims of unprovoked aggression; a Government has the right of self-defence. The free Church in a Free State formula belongs rather to pure than to applied politics: it presupposes social conditions other than those which actually prevail. The purely material conception of the State—"une association pour la police et pour la défense"—is inadequate and unworkable: the community develops a moral as well as a material organization, and cannot with impunity abdicate either its rights over or its duties to its members. So France has found to her cost: under the pretext of conscience, sedition has been admitted, the social structure has been undermined. The Affaire Dreyfus brought the country to the verge of civil war, and made legislation inevitable. "Sachez-le," exclaimed P. Couhé, S.J., in a sermon circulated by the hundred thousand under the title of "Le Glaive Electoral"—"il n'y aura à présenter aux élections prochaines, d'un bout à l'autre du territoire, que deux candidats: Jésus-Christ et Barabbas. Et Barabbas sous différents noms: Barabbas l'anti-clérical, Barabbas le franc-maçon, Barabbas le révolutionnaire, Barabbas l'anarchiste, Barabbas le communal. Allez-vous voter pour Barabbas?" The eyes of the electorate were opened:

Convenons d'abord que si pour les sectaires le moment d'assouvir leurs rancunes a paru on ne peut mieux choisir, c'est qu'aussi la partie leur a, sur certains points, été laissée un peu trop belle; c'est qu'il est trop certain que les prétextes invoqués par les persécuteurs ne sont pas tous également iniques et léonins. Certains ordres n'ont

¹ Fagnat, "Le Liberalisme," p. 106.

pas été aussi prudents qu'on avait pu le souhaiter; certains moines ont ouvertement déclaré la guerre à la République, gouvernement légal du pays; et la virulence de leurs attaques contre un gouvernement ennemi fut une arme à double tranchant. Le peuple français, jusqu' à ces derniers temps, n'aimait guère "le curé qui fait de la politique;" or, les jacobins ont pu lui dire et lui répéter sur tous les tons qu'il y avait des moines qui ne faisaient que cela! Ajouterai-je ceci: qu'il y a passé trop d'argent par les mains de certaines communautés? Et la véritable religion n'est-elle pas la première à souffrir de certaines dévotions parasites et un peu fétichistes?

In the face of such admissions it is disingenuous to speak of the hostility of the State to the Church as "unilatérale": in temper and tactics there is little to choose between the two extreme parties. And, in view of the consistent countenance, tacit under Leo XIII., avowed under his predecessor and the reigning Pontiff, given to the Bashl-Bazouks of the Vatican, it is misleading to describe "certains amis trop fougueux de l'Eglise" as "désavoués, sans doute, par elle." They have, in fact, carried everything before them.³ "L'Eglise des Gaules a passé à l'étranger: au Pape Roi a succédé le Pape Dieu."⁴ The extent to which the *communicatio idiomatum* has been carried may be judged by M. Noblemaire's language with regard to the contingency of the denunciation of the Concordat by the Holy See:

En ce qui concerne le Saint-Siège, la thèse des catholiques passivement soumis et respectueux est que . . . cela ne regarde que lui! De fait il est bien certain qu'il y a quelque irrévérence à sauter là-dessus les desseins du Souverain-Pontife, et qu'il y aurait

la plus risible outrecuidance à prétendre lui dicter sa conduite. . . . Toute opinion arrêtée risquerait d'être audacieuse et téméraire, et le mieux est assurément de s'en remettre à la sagesse inspirée du successeur de Saint Pierre.⁵

Thus Moses might have spoken had the tribesmen of Sinai mooted the revocation of the Tables of the Testimony; thus the courtiers of Herod acclaimed his oration—"It is the voice of a God, not of a man." But to be more is to be less than human: pride carried to this pitch overreaches itself and presages fall. The dissolution of a social is more lingering than that of the individual organism; but here as there metabolism, the free action of the natural forces of assimilation and reflection, is essential; the arrest of these processes is death.

The tide of opinion sets in favor of what are called Free Churches:

"La séparation de l'Eglise et de l'Etat s'imposera tôt ou tard" (says M. Ribot), "parce qu'elle est dans le courant des idées modernes; parce que l'Eglise reconnaitra elle-même que la liberté est une condition de sa dignité, et que tout privilège se tourne fatalement, de nos jours, en servitude."

So, too, M. Faguet:

La séparation absolue des Eglises et de l'Etat, les Eglises payées par leurs fidèles, administrées par leurs fidèles, gouvernées par ceux qui ont la confiance de leurs fidèles, c'est la seule solution libérale, c'est la seule solution rationnelle, c'est la seule solution pratique.

Such reasoning suffers from an excess of abstraction. Had we to do with a world of ideas its logic might convince us: religion is a fact of spiritual

nearest English parallel would be the announcement that Mr. John Kensit had been sworn of the Privy Council.

³ "Le Parti Noir," pp. 47-49.

⁴ "Concordat ou Séparation," p. 184.

² "Concordat ou Séparation," p. 100.

³ The recent elevation of the Abbe Delassus, author of the notorious "Americanisme et la Conjuraison Anti-chrétienne," to the rank of Domestic Prelate to Pius X. is significant. The

experience which each of us must make his own. No one can experience it for us, just as no one can think or feel for us: consciousness is incommunicable; we must experience, think, and feel for ourselves. "God and the soul; the soul and its God"—this, says Harnack, is the substance of Christianity. And here, in the last resort, Catholic and Protestant are at one: "it is face to face, *solus cum solo*," Cardinal Newman assures us, "in all matters between man and his God." So that the intrusion of a material element into this ideal scheme is incongruous, or even destructive: Christ's kingdom is "not of this world."

But the actual falls short of the ideal. The Gospel was given to men, not to pure spirits: the vessel freighted with it is embarked not on the "sea of glass like unto crystal" of the Apocalypse, but on the turbid and tempestuous ocean of humanity. With the extension of Christianity the human or exterior side of the Divine fact came into prominence. It was inevitable that this should be so: and if, as history shows, the material took place too often at the expense of the spiritual development—if the House of God became, like her prototype the Temple, a den of thieves—this is reason, indeed, for humiliation on her part, and for the watchful and efficient control of the conscience of the community acting through the civil power; but not for a confusion between the abstract and the concrete which would disregard at once actual social conditions and the laws of human nature. The Protestant Churches in France and the Nonconformist bodies in our own country have flourished under the voluntary system, and contributed out of proportion to their numbers to the increase and well-being of the commonwealth. But no inference can be drawn from these societies to a National Church. A separatist minority is composed, with

few exceptions, of men of decided character and convictions: narrow as may have been their tenets and sectarian their temper, the history of the Nonconformist Churches is one of hardness endured for conscience' sake. And this experience develops qualities of a high order in other departments of life than that of religion: the indolent and indifferent fall away. Hence these Churches have little hold on the masses of the population—their appeal is to a middle class, energetic, prosperous, and relatively intelligent; to the successful self-made man. The distinctive note of men of this type is self-reliance, not to say self-sufficiency; their independence is a vice bordering on a virtue, and a virtue on a vice. They are able and willing to provide themselves with the religious machinery which commends itself to them; to support a preacher, to build a chapel, to organize a school. The case of a National Church is different. Nominal as may be their adhesion, it numbers among its members those of the community least capable of recognizing and supplying their own needs, temporal or spiritual. Such persons are in the position of minors under the guardianship of the community, which, for their good and its own, charges itself with their training in citizenship, with their protection against those who would exploit them for selfish or interested purposes, and, above all, with their defence against themselves. If religious influences are useless or prejudicial to these ends, the case for the establishment of religion falls. But few will be found to maintain this; to argue that were Christianity removed mankind would be happier or more virtuous. The police theory of religion, indeed, needs only to be named to be rejected. Rather it is as giving the readiest and most efficacious access to the ideal that we prize it: to those who would escape from

the heavy and the weary weight
Of all this unintelligible world

it offers emancipation, peace, the spaciousness of the infinite. No honest student of history will minimize the sins of the Churches. But, be they what they may, they are outweighed by the treasure of the Gospel which the Churches contain, and in virtue of which they subsist. Other roads to these larger horizons, it may be urged, are open to us—art, literature, philosophy. To the educated few, yes; to the unlettered many, no. For these, at least, religion, with the symbols under which alone they can receive it, is vital: its disappearance would mean the encroachment of darkness upon the shores of light, of chaos on order, the weakening of the good and the strengthening of the evil that is in the world.

If the influences of religion are to be brought to bear upon the population as a whole, a religious organization must be provided. This is too important a matter to be left to individual initiative: to make the requisite provision is at once the right and the duty of the community: and in France, as in our own country, it has been made. The Concordat of 1801, recognizing that the "Roman Catholic religion is that of the great majority of French citizens," took measures for its re-establishment and free exercise. It was an act of the highest statesmanship. Bold in view of the past, for the fires of the Revolution were smouldering; prudent having regard to the present—for it not only guaranteed religious peace, but gave economic security by confirming the tenure under which the Church lands were held by their new owners—it stands, with the Code, a monument to the constructive genius of the man who more than any other has left his stamp not on France only, but on the Europe of to-day.* Nor

should the wisdom and moderation of the Holy See be overlooked. Pius VII., with whose name that of the virtuous and enlightened Consalvi must be associated, was equal to the occasion. He knew where to yield, and how to give way with dignity: he remembered that his Apostolic authority was a trust to be employed for the good not of the Church, but of religion; not of the clergy, but of mankind. Instead of meeting accomplished facts with the *non possumus* of later Pontiffs, he recognized them as constituting the situation with which he had to deal. He acquiesced in the wholesale alienation of Church property brought about by the Revolution: by a stretch of jurisdiction without parallel in history he suppressed the 135 historical bishoprics, substituting for them sixty new sees. That owing to subsequent events the Concordat has facilitated the Romanizing of the French Church is true. But neither this result nor the causes that led to it could have been foreseen. The Napoleonic *régime* was established to all appearance on lasting foundations. Had it remained, the influence of Rome on France would have been nominal and the development of Catholicism during the last century have proceeded on other lines than it did. Lust of conquest wrecked the Empire; no one Power could permanently absorb Europe. Its fall enabled Rome to concentrate into herself the powers inherent in the Church as a whole, and substitute a one-man rule for a constitutional monarchy. Ultramontanism may wreck the Papacy, as Caesarism wrecked the Empire, but for the time it is triumphant: Latin Christianity is the Pope.

In two notable respects successive Governments have allowed the Church to go beyond the terms of the Concordat. That agreement is silent on

* Cf. Brandes, "The Reaction in France," pp. 33-55.

the subject of religious associations. At the time of its formulation they were at once illegal and non-existent; and that the First Consul, in whose eyes the Church was as purely a branch of the civil service as the police or the post office, contemplated their revival will not be maintained. Omission was prohibition: it stereotyped the existing order of things. The Republic has been generous. In 1900 there were 200,000 religious in France—in 1789 their number was but 60,000; nor till its hand was forced did the Government interfere to protect itself against the withdrawal of so many citizens from the duties of citizenship, the scarcely veiled hostility of the orders to the institutions of the country, or the accumulation of property—in 1900 upwards of 1,071 million francs—in their hands. "Jamais, sous aucun régime, les congrégations ne se sont multipliées sur le territoire français autant qu'au cours des trente dernières années au dix-neuvième siècle. Leur développement prodigieux et presque démesuré est un des faits dominants de l'histoire sociale d'hier." Here, however, excessive as was the increase, social and economic changes called for a large interpretation of the treaty: ecclesiastical organization varies, within certain limits, according to the requirements of the times. With regard to the other point, the nomination of bishops, the necessity for departing from the terms of the Concordat is less apparent. The *Nobis nominavit* on which the Vatican now exists is foreign both to its letter and to its spirit. "Le premier Consul nommera aux archevêchés et évêchés . . . Sa Sainteté confèrera l'institution canonique." It is easy to imagine how a Napoleon would have met a refusal on the part of the Pope to institute his nominee. There is an increasing unwillingness, however, on the part of the State to enter upon a conflict with the spiritual

power, or to take measures which may be interpreted, however unreasonably, as an infringement of the rights of conscience. This reluctance is natural. Neither credit nor success is to be gained by such a policy: ideas, mischievous and erroneous as they may be, must be met not by force, but by ideas. It is the absolutest governments that have been the slowest to recognize this. Louis XIV. claimed the right to appoint vicars capitular; in the Pamiers case sentence of death was passed on those canonically elected by the chapter; Louis XV. suppressed religious houses as arbitrarily as M. Combes. The restored Bourbons revived the policy of their house: on the definition of the Immaculate Conception, in 1854, the Ministers of Napoleon III. gravely discussed the question whether the Dogmatic Bull of Pius IX. erecting that opinion into an article of faith should be received in France; the bishops were authorized to publish and the faithful to accept it by a majority of three to two. The Republic has been less exacting. The Definition of 1870 crossed the frontier without undergoing the formalities of the Douane or receiving the *Imprimatur* of the Minister; episcopal appointments became matter of arrangement between Rome and the Government; congregations, authorized and unauthorized, multiplied; industries, wealth, influence accumulated in their hands. The encroachment of the ecclesiastical on the civil power was tacit, gradual, unceasing. Suddenly, and when least expected, the awakening came. France found her progress barred, her liberties menaced, her life imperilled. Then, and not till then, she turned upon the disturbers of her peace.

Avide de progrès, la société prenait la résolution de briser ou de mettre hors d'état de lui nuire ceux qui entravaient sa marche. L'autorité ecclésiastique compétente n'avait pas voulu, ou

n'avait pas osé, surveiller, éclairer, diriger, réformer un grand nombre des congrégations: l'Etat les supprima. Educateurs fanatiques et rétrogrades, moines journalistes et obscurantistes, religieuses vivant dans la routine et trop portées à bâtir de grands couvents et de belles chapelles; innocents, coupables, ou suspects, tout fut balayé par une démocratie brutale et pressée.

There were those of their own order whose moderation would have restrained the excesses that at last exhausted the nation's patience; whose learning commanded the respect, whose virtues the sympathy, of good men, irrespective of party or creed. Their motives were denounced, their counsels derided; they were subjected to every humiliation which malice could dictate or fanaticism suggest. The case of the Abbé Loisy is fresh in memory. "Au lieu de s'adapter au monde qui les voulait de leur temps, et à chercher à sauver ce qui restait de l'antique foi, les vaincus se montraient surtout préoccupés d'écraser ceux de leurs coréligionnaires qui gardaient leur confiance dans la vérité et dans la liberté."⁷

Under the present Pontificate no change is to be expected: in theology, in economics, in politics, reactionary influences are dominant. Leo XIII. was essentially an opportunist. It may be doubted whether his policy as a whole was more enlightened than that of his successor. But certainly it was less impossible. He did not see the inevitableness of the new order either in thought or in things: he imposed the philosophy of St. Thomas on the Catholic schools, under the strange belief that it contained the key to life and experience; he hoped against hope for the restoration of the temporal power, scheming for it with a perseverance worthy of a better cause. But if he endeavored to stem the advancing

tide, his object was to direct, not to turn it: he believed it possible to reconcile knowledge with tradition, democracy with authority, society with the Church. If his conception of the content of these terms was inadequate, his belief in their ultimate identity was worthy of his office. And there was an elevation in his standpoint which gave his utterances dignity: he stood like a seer on a watch-tower surveying the ebb and flow of human affairs. He was conscious of something, he knew not what, in the air that betokened change and shifting: and though his personal sympathies were with the old order, he desired to facilitate the transition from it to the new. He did not always occupy this high level: as his energy failed with years "the malaria that clings about the base of the Rock of Peter" mounted, and the atmosphere even at the summit lost something of its serenity. But he refused to condemn science, his last public act being the appointment of a special commission designed to remove Biblical questions from the jurisdiction of tribunals whose competence and methods were suspect; he refused to stifle the Christian Democracy movement in Italy; he refused to break with France. Definitely and deliberately the present Pope has reversed these decisions. Things are what they are, and their consequences will be what they will be: the policy of Leo XIII. is dead.

A Concordat, to take M. Faguet's definition, is "un traité entre deux gouvernements done l'un a des sujets sur le territoire de l'autre; un partage d'autorité entre le pape et le souverain, une transaction entre deux pouvoirs qui sont forcés de s'abandonner l'un à l'autre quelque chose, mais qui tous les deux voudraient avoir tout." It is of the nature of a compromise. Could a hard and fast line be drawn between the spiritual and the temporal, there would be neither reason nor room for

⁷ "Un dernier Gallican: Henri Bernier," p. 433.

such an agreement. But hard and fast lines exist for thought only, not in things; in fact, a debatable land lies between the two. The clergy, for example, are at once ministers of Christ and public functionaries; marriage is a sacrament and a civil contract; education, a duty of parents and charge on the community. This territory is claimed in theory both by Church and State: in practice their rival claims are adjusted by a treaty in virtue of which each of the contracting parties, for the common good and in the interests of peace, cedes, or agrees not to press, certain of its claims. The debatable land becomes a buffer-State, influenced by each, though incorporated in neither, of its neighbors; a mediate or neutral zone.

It is obvious that such an arrangement presupposes a desire on each side to look for points of agreement rather than difference, to smooth over controversies, to discover or create common ground. The Combes Ministry has a worse reputation than it deserves in this respect. It is easier to take exception to the measures adopted with regard to the congregations than to deny the necessity of legislation against them: the Republic acted in self-defence. Nor must we apply English standards to France: the injustice of the Law of 1901 and the harshness with which it has occasionally been administered are more perceptible to us than to those immediately affected, who, were the situation reversed, would act with more rather than less vigor than their opponents. "*La France est un des pays les moins libres du monde et les moins libéraux de l'univers: tous les partis quand ils sont vainqueurs devenant immédiatement redoutables et détestables.*" The defects of the actual régime are inherited, the absolutist traditions of the Monarchy having passed over bodily into the Republic:

L'omnipotence royale est devenue l'omnipotence populaire, la souveraineté nationale; l'omniscience royale est devenue l'omniscience populaire et cette idée que le gouvernement choisi par le peuple doit penser, croire et dogmatiser pour tout le monde; l'omnipossession royale est devenue l'omnipossession populaire et cette idée que tout le territoire français appartient à tous les Français; et en un mot, la théorie du bon plaisir royal est devenue la théorie du bon plaisir populaire. Il est impossible d'être républicains d'une manière plus parfaitement monarchique.*

The impression left by recent events is that the Republic has not been the aggressor. The protest of the Vatican against M. Loubet's visit to Rome would have been taken as a form had it not been for the insertion of an offensive clause, omitted in the copy addressed to France, into the Identical Note forwarded to the Catholic Powers. The proceedings against the Bishops of Dijon and Laval were ill-timed and ill-judged. Ill-timed, because their effect was, and could not but be, that of a spark in a powder magazine. Supposing that the charges brought against the bishops were true, there were prelates nearer Rome whose record was as dubious: it is difficult for those who know even a little of French parties to doubt that religion was but a pretext—that politics, not piety, lay at the root of the affair. Ill-judged, because, while the Pope under existing canon law possesses undoubted disciplinary powers over the episcopate, the manner in which those powers shall be exercised is matter of circumstance. Who does not remember the contempt poured by Burke on the argument that the Mother Country had a right to tax the Colonies? She had. But the attempt to enforce it cost her North America. A wise man is slow to assert his rights, or what he believes to be such, to the full. He will ask himself

* Fagnet, "*Le Liberalisme*," pp. 307, 322, 327.

in each case, not, Have I such a right? but, Is it proper or possible to use it? That Rome has never acknowledged the Organic Articles of 1802 is true. But they have the force of law in France; and it is one thing to refuse to admit them, another to act as if they were non-existent.

Nor is it necessary to bring the Organic Articles into the discussion. It is a fair inference from the Concordat (Articles IV.-V.) that a bishop named by the Government and instituted by the Pontiff cannot be removed from, or disturbed in the exercise of, his office without the concurrence of both powers. The summons to Rome addressed to the Bishops of Dijon and Laval was no mere matter of routine. Had it been so the famous Article XX.—in the Organic Articles—would have remained, as it always has remained, a dead letter: to assert or insinuate that there has been any attempt on the part of the Government to hinder freedom of communication between the Bishops and the Pontiff is simply untrue. It was in view of a judicial inquiry by the Inquisition into certain misconduct alleged against them that Mgr. Le Nordez and Mgr. Geay were called upon, under threat of excommunication, to present themselves. The Government insisted, rightly, that they were civil officials as well as Church dignitaries, and that the Inquisition was a tribunal unknown to French law. But the question is not one of persons. That, yielding to ecclesiastical pressure, the bishops have resigned their sees is immaterial; to advertise their submission as a triumph of Papal diplomacy is an empty boast. No other course was open to them. They were, probably, not the men to withstand Peter; nor is Peter to be withstood on his own ground. Think as we will of the claims of Rome, they are in possession both in fact and in canon law. With the best case in the

world an individual bishop is powerless; he could as little defy the Vatican as an excursion steamer could defy the Channel Fleet. Not a sacristan would stand by him. The position must be turned, if at all, by a series of flank movements; the Papacy is not to be resisted but explained. In the present instance public interest attaches not to the merits of individuals, but to the principle involved. Episcopal misconduct is one of those mixed questions which Concordats exist to deal with: had common-sense and goodwill been present the dispute could have been settled in half an hour between the Nuncio and the Minister of Public Worship. Unfortunately, on one side at least, those qualities were wanting. Nor is it possible to isolate the case. It is believed, rightly or wrongly, that these proceedings are the prelude to an attempt to "purge" the episcopate; and that certain prelates of unblemished reputation, whose only offences are their attitude of reserve towards the congregations, their refusal to support the campaign against the Republic, and—in a few cases—their sympathy with the movement towards a scientific theology, are already marked out for attack. The refusal of Rome to institute to the ten sees now vacant gives color to this belief, which is entertained in quarters usually well informed, and has been encouraged by the clerical press. This process of "purging" would be facilitated by the repeal of the Concordat: were this brought about the bishops and higher clergy would be simply nominees of Rome. Thus the rights of the laity, surviving, however faintly, under the present system, as in our own "*congé d'élire*," would be extinguished; thus the last vestige of popular election, without which the early Church refused to acknowledge a bishop as legitimately appointed, would disappear. The present method of selection is not

ideal. "Le gouvernement propose un fripon; Rome un curé de campagne: on nomme un imbécile," said a cynic; and though, applied to a hierarchy of which Mgr. Mignot and Mgr. La Croix are members, the formula is inadequate, it contains the proverbial grain of truth. Whether things will be better if, as in England, Rome had a free hand may be doubted. "What sort of men are the Roman Catholic bishops?" an English convert of the last generation, a militant Ultramontane, was asked. "Morally, highly respectable; intellectually, beneath contempt," was the answer. The choice of authority falls instinctively on pliant nullities, opportunist under one Pope, frankly obscurantist under another. With twenty years of Pius X. and his Spanish advisers the French hierarchy would consist of Richards, Turinaz, and Rumeaux. The interests of religion would suffer. Given a quick-witted people, already sitting loose to and contemptuous of Catholicism, it is easy to foresee the result.

It will not come with observation. A schism presupposes one of two things—either the *cujus regio ejus religio* relation between rulers and ruled, which made the Reformation possible; or a widespread interest in the points at issue, such as brought about the Scottish Disruption in 1843. Neither the one nor the other exists in France to-day. A bishop was questioned by Leo XIII. as to the possibility of a separatist Gallican movement. "Il n'y a pas de danger," he replied. "Alors vous croyez que le peuple français ne se laisserait pas détourner de la religion catholique?" "Saint Père, le peuple se moque de nous." The nation is indifferent. Catholicism is a thing as remote from the life of the average citizen as Buddhism: the clergy, as distinct from the Clericals, are not hated, but they are of no account. Active hostility were more hopeful. A revolt

necessitates recognition; indifference passes unperceived. And its advance has been rapid:

Depuis trente ans nous avons perdu toutes les batailles. Bataille électorale: nous sommes à peine une petite minorité. Bataille scolaire: la plupart des enfants élevés dans nos écoles, devenus hommes votent contre nous; ceux qui sortent de vos collèges nous attaquent. Bataille religieuse: le peuple qui était avec nous, il y a trente ans, s'est désaffectonné, nous a lâchés, nous hait aujourd'hui.*

Various causes may be assigned for this: the deterioration of popular religion—"Si vous pouviez vous figurer l'abîme d'idolâtrie où est tombé le clergé français!" wrote Montalembert in 1870; its persistent and compromising alliance with reactionary political parties and with all that is least worthy in public life; the sectarian character which it has assumed. But more fatal than any of these has been the claim to infallibility, the apotheosis of the errors and abuses of the past. A happy inconsistency enables the reformed Churches to throw off this shirt of Nessus. If they assert their inerrancy as a fact, they repudiate it as a dogma. "The purest Churches under heaven are subject to mixture and error," says the Westminster Confession: their mistakes and misdeeds can be treated as those of individuals, and disavowed by the community. With Catholicism it is otherwise. There the prerogative, originally loose and floating, has been stereotyped: the Vatican Council embodied it in the Roman Pontiff, who, speaking *ex cathedra*, "possesses that infallibility with which Christ willed His Church to be endowed." The vagueness of the specification leaves a loophole for casuists; but the intention is clear. What the Fathers did not see was that the gift

* "Pourquoi les catholiques ont perdu la bataille," p. 9.

was one which recoiled on its recipient. They thought to equip the Pontiff with Ithuriel's spear: in fact they forged a weapon useful only as long as it is not used. Leo XIII. perceived this, and used it as though he used it not. His successor is less cautious. A catechist was explaining the nature of faith: it was believing on authority what you did not see. "For instance," he said, "if God told you that there was a chair in the middle of the room, and you did not see it, would you believe that it was there?" "Yes," was the answer: "but"—dubiously—"would you sit down upon it?" Pius X. is trying to sit down upon it:—with the natural result.

Two consequences would follow the denunciation of the Concordat: one material, the suppression of the Budget des Cultes—that is to say, the financial paralysis of French Catholicism; the other moral, the acute clericalizing of religion—that is to say, the widening of the gulf between religious and national life. On neither can good men look without misgiving: the effect of the two combined would be to offer France the choice between an impossible religion and no religion at all. The annual sum received by the Church from the nation is estimated at from 37 to 45 million francs—upwards of a million and a half sterling. A question has been raised whether, as this sum was accepted as the equivalent of the confiscated Church lands, the claim to it would lapse with the Concordat. The discussion is academic; it is certain that, with the exception of a few retiring pensions, not a sou would be paid. On the other hand, if anyone supposes that this sum, or anything approaching it, can be raised voluntarily, he must be singularly sanguine. In the mind of the average Frenchman of the middle or lower class the presence of the priest at marriages and funerals adds to the decorum of

life. But he expects it to be provided for him at the public expense. An occasional gift supplements the curé's scanty stipend; but to guarantee the yearly 1,000 or 1,500 francs for the support of a functionary whom he tolerates rather than accepts, and whose services he regards as ornamental rather than necessary, is foreign to his nature. The case of Ireland and the English-speaking countries where Catholicism of the Irish type prevails is not parallel. The Irish, trained to give, and the least provident of races, are intensely Catholic; the French, unaccustomed to maintain a religious establishment, and frugal to a fault, are Catholic rather by acquiescence than by conviction or sympathy; in the one case religious is one with national sentiment, in the other the two are opposed. In France, as elsewhere, there are enthusiastic Catholics, but they are a small minority; and, with the best will in the world, the financing of religion is beyond them. In the towns the voluntary system might work, though at the expense of other charitable funds—Peter's Pence, the *Œuvre de la Propagation de la Foi*, &c. In the country, Brittany excepted, it would break down. The parochial clergy, already subsisting on a minimum wage, would be starved out—gradually in the north, rapidly in the south and east—and Catholicism, of all forms of Christianity the most dependent on its plant, would be in danger of extinction. Nothing but a reaction on a large scale could save it; and not only is there no sign of such a reaction, but the conditions which it presupposes are absent. This is not to say that Catholicism has no future. The vitality of religion is inexhaustible: in the long run the Gospel may be trusted to overcome the alien elements which have attached themselves to it—the corruption of human nature, the commandments of men. But a religious revival is one thing, a

Catholic reaction another; the past survives in the future, but does not, as past, reappear. As idea, as sentiment, as fact, religion is immortal; but the symbols under which it presents itself change. *Pereunt et imputantur*:

Our little systems have their day.

So much for the material loss involved in the suppression of the Budget des Cultes: morally, the severing of the ties, such as they are, which unite religion to the State would work even more disastrously: the Church would become a sect. The two notions are contradictory: what the one affirms the other denies. The one represents a backwater, the other the main stream of the world's thought and life; the one a party, the other mankind. And religion is too powerful a force to be isolated without danger both to itself and to the community. Consciousness is a whole: if it be broken up, disintegration, moral and material, follows. One element balances another: religion, unless it passes over into its other, becomes fanaticism! the stream which, confined within its banks, fertilizes a province becomes, if it overflows them, a devastating flood. This truth underlies the theory of the relation between Church and State known as Erastianism. The Divine is not manifested in the Church only; nor is it only in the world that the colors of good and evil are mixed. The spiritual needs the counterweight of the secular, the clerical of the lay element, theology of knowledge and common-sense. Nowhere is this truer than in the Roman Catholic Church of to-day. The restraints imposed upon her by the civil power have been her salvation, in so far as they have acted as a check upon her tendency to narrow herself to the temper and dimensions of a party, to react against rather than to act with the forces that are moulding

mankind. This is to forfeit her Catholic name and birthright. It is easy to enlarge upon the sins of mediæval Christianity: to contrast its ignorance with our enlightenment, its bigotry with our tolerance, its inhumanity with our sensitiveness. Such contrasts are as obvious as the inference suggested is fallacious. The mediæval Church was neither more ignorant, more intolerant, or more inhuman than the world which it reflected. This is why the mediæval world was Catholic; the reason why the modern world has ceased to be so is that the Church has ceased to reflect the world. The separation between the two, political rather than religious in origin and character, dates, in its acute form, from the ill-omened alliance between the Spanish-Austrian Monarchy and the Papacy: its several stages, incipient, developed, virulent, are marked by the Renaissance, the Reformation, and the Revolution—the conflict being respectively with the intelligence, the conscience, and the liberties of mankind. Neither of the combatants has come off scathless: the absence and the perversion of religion are equally destructive of idealism and elevation of character. But before condemning the modern State for rejecting religion let us consider how irreligious is the religion which it rejects. "Cela nous semble ridicule. Mais c'est odieux."¹ In so far as the State has thriven at the expense of the Church, it is because it represents a higher conscience and culture; in so far as the Church has declined, it is because she has been unfaithful to her idea and calling; because her standard has become lower than that of what, with a touch of pharisaism, she calls the world. The result has been the alienation of all that is best and most vigorous in French life from religion. Less worthy motives have, no doubt, combined to

¹ "Le Parti Noir," p. 40.

produce this estrangement: but to ascribe it wholly, or even mainly, to such would be to deceive ourselves; it is the tragedy of a nation's faith. "O my Mother! whence is this unto thee, that thou hast good things poured upon thee, and canst not keep them, and bearest children, yet darest not own them? How is it that whatever is generous in purpose . . . thy power and thy promise, falls from thy bosom, and finds no home within thy arms?" Thus on the eve of his secession did Newman apostrophize the Church of England. Time brings strange reverses. Can we read them two generations later and not apply them to the Church of Rome of to-day?

Perhaps it is not too late to turn back. It is as much in the interest of France as of the Vatican to avoid a final rupture: and as, of the two, France has the quicker intelligence, it is in France that counsels of prudence may be expected to prevail. Neither, it is clear, is desirous of taking the initiative; each wishes to saddle the other with the odium attaching to the irrevocable step. M. Combes protests that the hostility of the Vatican makes the Concordat unworkable: the Vatican, replies the "Osservatore Romano," has adhered scrupulously to its letter and spirit; it is the Ministry which, determined on its policy, endeavors hypocritically to shift the responsibility from itself to Rome. A change of caste might facilitate a better understanding. M. Combes is not France; Cardinal Merry del Val is not the Papacy. Secretaries, popes even, pass; the Church remains. Be his personal views what they may, the statesman will remember this. Think what we will of her claims and ultimate destiny, the Catholic Church will for long be a factor in the social and political life of Europe. She has that possession which goes for so much both in

fact and law. And her past guarantees her future: she will perish, if indeed it be her fate to perish—and he would be a bold prophet who pledged himself to the prediction—not with sudden destruction, but of secular decay. Meanwhile she has it in her to be a veritable thorn in the flesh to society; meeting it here with sullen resistance, there with avowed hostility, here a martyr, there a conspirator or an assailant, as time and opportunity serve. Nothing short of universal domination contents her: she must be oppressed or oppressor; she is persecuted where she is not supreme. In such a warfare the State is at a disadvantage: subtle, watchful, unwearied, the Church, like the serpent in the Creation story, lies in wait for her heel. Hence—"au fond tout gouvernement est anti-religieux . . . l'Etat a quelque tendance à ne pas aimer beaucoup même la morale."¹¹ It might be said, with equal truth, that every Church is anti-social and unethical: and in each case the truth that it contains gives point to the paradox. To repel force, force is necessary. But it is an expedient, not a remedy: the victory over ignorance is won only by knowledge, that over darkness by light. The temptation of civil society is to forget this. Having to act for the moment, it looks for immediate results in a field where progress must be gradual; it leans on the arm of flesh. If the French Government has not been without reproach in this matter, the error has not been without provocation, and may be repaired. Will the Vatican meet the Republic halfway? Will Pius X., even at the last moment, refrain from destroying the *modus vivendi* which his predecessor created and maintained? The question is one of temper rather than of measures, of tact than of principle. But the times are revolutionary: and

¹¹ Faguet, "Le Liberalisme," pp. 111, 113.

in revolutionary times moderate parties rarely produce much effect. A moderate man may be, and often is, the best informed, the most rational, the most highly gifted man of his time; but his very virtues, moral and intellectual alike, disqualify him for the position of a party leader. For this the requisite is enthusiasm, real or pretended; and for enthusiasm the first condition is, in most cases, either an intellectual incapacity for seeing more than one side of a question, or a moral obliquity, which prevents a man from acknowledging another when he does see it.

Such times are not those on which later generations look back with most satisfaction; nor those which have contributed most efficaciously to the advancement of mankind. A Turgot does more for civilization than a Robespierre: a Leo XIII. for religion than a Pius IX. The State is not the stronger in the long run for being set in opposition to the Church, or the Church to the State. Public support is, as things stand, a condition of efficient, public control of rational religion: the spiritual moralizes the civil power, the civil humanizes the spiritual; in idea, at least, the two are one. In fact, alas!

it is otherwise. "It is so ordered on high," said the greatest Catholic divine of our generation, "that in our day Holy Church should present just that aspect to my countrymen which is most consonant with their ingrained prejudice against her, most unpromising for their conversion."¹² Nor is this so in England only: over how great a part of Europe has religion forgotten her necessity, if underlying, harmony with reason, her hereditary mission to announce peace upon earth and goodwill towards men! If the harvest is disastrous, it is her own sowing: the crop follows the seed. But her vitality is greater than we conceive it. Distant as it may be, we look for a new seed-time, a second harvest following on a second spring. "The Church," wrote Warburton during the now forgotten controversies of the eighteenth century, "like the ark of Noah, is worth saving, not for the sake of the unclean beasts and vermin that almost filled it, and probably made most noise and clamor in it; but for the little corner of rationality, that was as much distressed by the stink within it as by the tempest without."

CONVENTION DU 26 MESSIDOR AN IX.

ENTRE LE GOUVERNEMENT FRANÇAIS ET SA SAINTÉTÉ PIE VII

(Texte du Concordat.)

Le Gouvernement de la République reconnaît que la religion catholique, apostolique et romaine est la religion de la grande majorité des citoyens français.

Sa Sainteté reconnaît également que cette même religion a retiré et attend encore en ce moment le plus grand bien et le plus grand éclat de l'établissement du culte catholique en France et de la profession particulière qu'en font les Consuls de la République.

En conséquence, d'après cette recon-

naissance mutuelle, tant pour le bien de la religion que pour le maintien de la tranquillité intérieure, ils sont convenus de ce qui suit:

Article premier. La religion catholique, apostolique et romaine sera librement exercée en France. Son culte sera public, en se conformant aux règlements de police, que le Gouvernement jugera nécessaire pour la tranquillité publique.

II. Il sera fait par le Saint-Siège, de concert avec le Gouvernement, une nouvelle circonscription des diocèses français.

¹² J. H. Newman, "Via Media," ed. 1877, *preface*.

III. Sa Sainteté déclare aux titulaires des évêchés français qu'elle attend d'eux avec une ferme confiance, pour le bien de la paix et de l'unité, toute espèce de sacrifices, même celui de leurs sièges.

D'après cette exhortation, s'ils se refusaient à ce sacrifice, commandé par le bien de l'Eglise (refus, néanmoins, auquel Sa Sainteté ne s'attend pas), il sera pourvu par de nouveaux titulaires au gouvernement des évêchés de la circonscription nouvelle, de la manière suivante:

IV. Le premier Consul de la République nommera, dans les trois mois qui suivront la publication de la bulle de Sa Sainteté, aux archevêchés et évêchés de la circonscription nouvelle. Sa Sainteté confèrera l'institution canonique suivant les formes établies par rapport à la France avec le changement de gouvernement.

V. Les nominations aux évêchés qui vaqueront dans la suite seront également faites par le premier Consul, et l'institution canonique sera donnée par le Saint-Siège, en conformité de l'article précédent.

VI. Les évêques, avant d'entrer en fonctions, prêteront directement, entre les mains du premier Consul, le serment de fidélité qui était en usage avant le changement de gouvernement, exprimé dans les termes suivants:

"Je jure et promets à Dieu, sur les saints évangiles, de garder obéissance et fidélité au Gouvernement établi par la Constitution de la République française. Je promets aussi de n'avoir aucune intelligence, de n'assister à aucun conseil, de n'entretenir aucune ligue, soit au dedans, soit au dehors, qui soit contraire à la tranquillité publique; et si, dans mon diocèse ou ailleurs, j'apprends qu'il se trame quelque chose au préjudice de l'Etat, je le ferai savoir au Gouvernement."

VII. Les ecclésiastiques du second ordre prêteront le même serment entre les mains des autorités civiles désignées par le Gouvernement.

VIII. La formule de prière suivante sera récitée à la fin de l'office divin, dans toutes les églises catholiques de

France: *Domine, salvam fac Rempublicam; Domine, salvos fac Consules.*

IX. Les évêques feront une nouvelle circonscription des paroisses de leurs diocèses, qui n'aura d'effet que d'après le consentement du Gouvernement.

X. Les évêques nommeront aux cures.

Leur choix ne pourra tomber que sur des personnes agréées par le Gouvernement.

XI. Les évêques pourront avoir un chapitre dans leur cathédrale et un séminaire pour leur diocèse, sans que le Gouvernement s'oblige à les doter.

XII. Toutes les églises métropolitaines, cathédrales, paroissiales et autres non aliénées, nécessaires au culte, seront mises à la disposition des évêques.

XIII. Sa Sainteté, pour le bien de la paix et l'heureux rétablissement de la religion catholique, déclare que ni elle ni ses successeurs ne troubleront en aucune manière les acquéreurs des biens ecclésiastiques aliénés; et qu'en conséquence la propriété de ces biens demeurera incommutable entre leurs mains ou celles de leurs ayants cause.

XIV. Le Gouvernement assurera un traitement convenable aux évêques et aux curés dont les diocèses et les cures seront compris dans la circonscription nouvelle.

XV. Le Gouvernement pendra également des mesures pour que les catholiques français puissent, s'ils le veulent, faire en faveur des églises des fondations.

XVI. Sa Sainteté reconnaît, dans le premier Consul de la République française, les mêmes droits et prérogatives dont jouissait près d'elle l'ancien gouvernement.

XVII. Il est convenu entre les parties contractantes que, dans le cas où quel qu'un des successeurs du premier Consul actuel ne serait pas catholique, les droits et prérogatives mentionnés dans l'article ci-dessus, et la nomination aux évêchés, seront réglés, par rapport à lui, par une nouvelle convention.

Les ratifications seront échangées à Paris, dans l'espace de quarante jours. Fait à Paris, le 26 messidor de l'an IX de la République française.

VISITS TO PARIS AFTER THE GREAT WAR.

BY MRS. FREDERIC HARRISON.

The dilettante has no longer a niche left him in our civilization of to-day. A generation, however, which worships Dumas, and has been brought up on Stevenson, may fondly imagine that one art yet remains open to the merest amateur; but it is not so. *L'art de conspirer* is still a fine art, needing special aptitudes and talents, exacting a long apprenticeship before the smallest success can be won, as I shall hope to make good in the following story.

After the war of 1870-71 English men and women had been reluctantly obliged to give up visits to France. The outbreak of the Commune, the political unrest, and the angry feeling that ensued had frightened the timid, and had made travellers generally consider whether France was a happy place in which to make holiday. From Paris in particular visitors had kept away. In 187—, however, we accepted a pressing invitation from English friends who had their home in France, and were at that time living in Paris. We crossed the Channel on a wild, stormy day in September, and I remember well that the service was late, and that as we clattered up the paved street in the old *quartier* where our friends lived we were thoroughly weary, and had no wish but to go to bed. Our hostess lit a candle and prepared to show us our rooms; but the host, after looking into the passage and carefully shutting the door, said that he had something to say first. "I want you to promise," he said to me, "not to pull out, or attempt to open, a wooden case which is under your bed. The servants and the *concierge* have no notion what is inside, but believe it to be something from our English home which we have not found a place for."

"But tell me, I beg of you," I began.

"This is the story," said he. "You know that the Vendôme Column was pulled down in the recent disturbances. The shattered pieces lay along and across the roadway on mattresses which had been spread to receive them. The little figure that had stood in the outstretched hand of Napoleon lay amongst the *débris* uninjured. It disappeared. Now you must know that that little figure is a fetich to the French people—'Mademoiselle Victoire' they called her—and when the regular Government got possession of Paris and began to collect the scattered pieces of the column in order to re-erect it, a great clamor was made and an elaborate search instituted for Mademoiselle Victoire; but she has never been found. Mademoiselle Victoire is under your bed; and I must impress upon you that if it were to be known that she were here, it would certainly cost the life of someone; indeed, we might all be shot. This is how I came to have possession of her. A young workman whom I know well, and for whom I have the greatest respect, was present among the crowd when the column was pulled down. The Victory rolled on the ground at his feet. He swore to himself that that symbol of war and of the aggression of the Napoleonic *régime* should never be raised on high again as an image to be worshipped; so, with a sort of superstitious feeling that he was helping to *scotch* an evil thing that might yet work mischief to France, he carried home the figure and hid it. It is about two feet six inches in height. When, however, the search for 'Mademoiselle Victoire' began, it became a matter of life and death for him to conceal it

any longer in his poor lodging, and he brought it to me one night and begged me to keep it and promise never to give it back. I hate the Second Empire and all that it represents as much as my friend the workman," said our host, "and so I have kept the Victory; but 'tis a guest that might bring us death, so swear never, &c., &c." And we swore.

That night I dreamed an endless dream, as it seemed, of a long series of dangers and disasters, and when in the early morning the market carts came rattling in over the stones of the old street, I woke to fancy that I heard the tramp of soldiers on the stairs and the grounding of arms outside my door. I jumped up and listened, and my first act in the peaceful daylight was to take a good look at the sarcophagus in which "Mademoiselle Victoire" reposed. It was a wooden packing-case, nailed down, with an English address on a card fastened to it.

It may be well here to tell the end of the story. Our host was most anxious to be rid of his dangerous visitor. Paris was still full of strange rumors, and the demon of suspicion walked abroad. There was talk of getting the Victory to England, but it was felt that the Victory belonged to French history, and could not be moved from French soil. I remember the late Lord Houghton's delight when we told him the story. What a triumph it would be to put the Victory up in his hall, said he. For many years I heard no trustworthy account of her ultimate fate. I have been told that on a dark night a *flacre* was called, the case put inside, and driven to the river, where two men hired a boat, and, rowing downstream, lowered it into the Seine. But the true story is thus. Our English friends left Paris, and before leaving were greatly troubled as to how to dispose of the Victory. An old lady, a staunch Republican, offered to

take it. She felt that she would be doing her country a service to keep it out of the way. But her sweet and beneficent life had not prepared her for such a troublesome guest. It got upon her nerves; she found herself always thinking of it; and at last she persuaded a friend to relieve her of the responsibility. He, in a flippant spirit, painted the poor Victory white. He described to me how odd she looked, and shorn of her glory, and how like a malefactor he felt when he had reduced her to the level of a plaster cast. He tried many plans of concealment, and at last wedged her tight into a disused chimney. But after a while he, too, found the part too onerous to sustain. He would wake in the night at some chance noise to fancy that she had fallen down the chimney and was being picked up by the *conciergerie*. "Elle m'obsédait," said he, "à un tel point" that one day he determined to have done with her for ever; so, years after the day on which we found her in our friend's house, he carried her to a deserted open space outside Paris and laid her carefully down upon a heap of rubbish. I have always felt that the Victory imposed her personality very strongly upon those who had charge of her.

The authorities, I need not say, very soon discovered her, divested her of her coating of white paint, and replaced her on the Colonne Vendôme, where once more she presides over the destinies of France.

"Je n'étais pas fait pour être conspirateur," said my friend.

Readers of French novels may have read a book lately published in which the adventures of "Mademoiselle Victoire" are set forth, but the adventures are fictitious. The story I have told is history, and I think it proves my point that conspiracy is a fine art.

We left our friend's house at the end of a week to go to an hotel, and then,

for the first time, I made some acquaintance with old Paris—the Paris which to-day has been improved away. It was our great privilege to have as cicerone M. Pierre Laffitte. It would be impossible to convey to those who never knew him his charm of conversation, the wit, humor, learning, and sympathy which made his society so delightful and informing. I may say here that he was an intimate of M. Anatole France, who in one of the sages of "l'Orme du Mail" has drawn a delicate picture of our friend. M. Laffitte, then, was our guide.

"La journée sera dure, mais elle finira," said he, laughingly, as we started out. He took us up narrow paved streets where no carriage could pass, and where the people sat in the streets at their trades. At a certain place he would always pause, and, taking off his hat, murmur, "C'est la terre sacrée de la Révolution," and then he would show the Rue Servandoni, where the great Condorcet lay hid, and where he wrote his famous treatise, "On the Progress of the Human Mind," whilst the Mountain was hunting him to death.

We saw the Rue de Foulon, where rumor has it that Dante lived when, as a student, he came to work in Paris. He bade us observe how the great rose window of Notre Dame, which was in Dante's time the marvel of architecture, showed clear above the low houses, and how one might be permitted to imagine that it was here that the poet was inspired with the idea of the mystic rose of the Trinity in the "Paradiso." We wandered round the Sorbonne in the haunts of the students, and saw the little old gabled house in which Marat was killed by Charlotte Corday.

I cannot rehearse all that we saw on that memorable day. I only know that we were quite wearied out as we turned our steps to his flat in the

Rue d'Assas, he entertaining us all the way with a dissertation on the philosophy of courage in the abstract, and courage *en face de l'obus*. As we neared home he suddenly stopped. "Ah! here lay poor Jules in his blood for a day and a night, and none dared approach him. He was the baker's lad, and brought me my rolls every morning; but he fought on a barricade, or was supposed to have fought, so they put him up against the wall, and shot him then and there. He was a good lad, the only support of his mother. Those are memories that sink deep. He had a generous heart, poor Jules!"

Perhaps I may be allowed here to tell a tale which Mr. Charles Austin told me of a scene he witnessed when the Versaillais entered Paris. The tale has been told in a poem by Victor Hugo. This is Mr. Charles Austin's prose version. He saw, one day roaming about Paris—a not uncommon sight—a group of men and women put against a wall to be shot. Their hands were supposed to be blackened with powder. Amongst them was a lad of twelve or fourteen who, before the order to shoot could be given, stepped forward and begged to be allowed to take back the watch his mother had lent him. He produced a huge turnip of a watch and promised faithfully to return. Mr. Austin said it was a moment of anguish. None could be sure that the child was telling the truth; but the officer commanding, giving him a kick, said: "Va-t'en au diable!" The child ran off, the order to shoot rang out, but the horrid business was hardly over before the clatter of feet was heard, the boy reappeared round a corner, and, putting himself against the wall, prepared for death. It was impossible to kill that heroic little soul. "It renews one's faith in human nature," said Mr. Austin.

But there were other things in Paris besides these dregs of revolution. M.

Turgenev was there, and it was to be our privilege to make his acquaintance. In those days Turgenev was not the accepted classic that he has since become. I had learnt to know and appreciate him from G. H. Lewes and G. Elliot, who had a veritable cult for the great Russian, and our old friend, M. Kovalevski, had promised to procure for me the pleasure of a visit from him. So we waited in our modest apartment, very high up, I am afraid, in a Paris hotel, for the arrival of the great man. Punctual to a moment almost he came, and, sitting down, he said, in his perfect eighteenth-century French: "Well, *mes amis*, Kovalevski tells me that you read my books, and would like to see me. Here I am; now what shall we talk about?"

I have seen many distinguished men, politicians, warriors, writers, poets, artists, but I never saw any man who was so completely the hero. Well over six feet in height, with long limbs and spare frame, clad in a loose coat, he carried himself with an ease and dignity that impressed you as of one of the natural lords of creation. His head was that of the Olympian Jove, crowned with thick locks as white as snow. Very dark eyes under thick, overhanging brows flashed a thousand meanings at you as he spoke. His voice was full and musical, his manner simple without pose, though at that time he was the darling of the French *salons*. A fine, noble nature one felt, with a passionate sympathy for the people, and along with the artist's perception of the beautiful, the look of one who had seen and suffered much.

He said that we had a long afternoon before us, and could have a real "conversation." Were we interested in the social question in Russia? Wouldn't we like to ask questions? And he himself began the questions by inquiring which of his books we had read, and which we liked best. I said, "Récits

d'un Chasseur Russe" and "Elena," in the English translation "On the Eve." He then told us the whole story of how the "Récits" had come to be written, and of the consequences the book had entailed upon him. He gave us a wonderful account, too, of his reception by the students, men and women, at the University of Moscow, and of the touching welcome they had given him. He said that I was right, a thousand times right, to put "Elena" first. He considered it to be the best and truest of his novels. And so we talked and talked of the state of Russia, of the barbarous treatment of the Communards in Paris, and many other things, till the evening drew on and he had to rush away to dinner. He promised to come to stay with us in England, but added, somewhat sorrowfully: "When a man makes his home in another man's nest he is not always able to do as he would like. But my parcel," said he; "I have dropped it; it is the *souliers de satin de ces demoiselles*." So we parted, already old friends, never, alas! to meet again.

The next summer found us established at Fontainebleau. It was a time of grave political unrest. The fate of the Republic seemed to hang in the balance, and men spoke of nothing but the various pretenders, of revolution, and of civil war. Gambetta had just made his great speech, of which one sentence had rung through the country. He summoned the discredited Government *ou se soumettre ou se démettre*. A general election was imminent, and the air was charged with a dangerous electricity. Our first instinct on arrival was to provide ourselves with newspapers, but we found that the news vendor in the town would not, dared not in fact, supply any Republican paper. The "Débats," the "République Française"—Gambetta's organ—the "Temps," and many other respectable journals could not be

bought anywhere, but the friends in whose house we were to live had arranged that a supply should be sent us daily from Paris in a paper parcel. There were six copies of, I think, the "*République Française*," which we were to give away quietly to people who otherwise would not have seen a Republican paper. One was for the gardener, a fine old peasant and most worthy citizen; another for a *garde champêtre*, a third for the laundress. All six papers had to be secretly given away. It was a strange state of things that under a republican government people in the country were afraid to sell republican prints of the greatest respectability.

We have all heard the story of how there were people living in England who had never heard the name of Queen Victoria, but I had never before realized how difficult it is to make every voter in a country acquainted with the mere names of different political leaders. For whom and for what were these poor country folk going to vote at the coming election? Here the importance of Gambetta's military campaign became evident. That campaign had saved the self-respect of France, and Gambetta's name was, at all events, known in every cottage. "Eh, que voulez-vous? Nous avons toujours Gambetta," said our *cocher* one day when we were trying to talk politics. But what could the uneducated voter make of the names of the different candidates for power—the Empress Eugénie, the Prince Imperial, the Duc d'Aumale, the Comte de Paris, Thiers, MacMahon, Gambetta?

But one day a bombshell fell in our midst. Even Marshal MacMahon's newspapers had to announce the death of M. Thiers, "*le Libérateur du Territoire*"—yes, and the man who was credited with the suppression of the rebellion of the Commune with needless brutality. The death came at last

unexpectedly, and the event was felt by everyone to be a serious catastrophe. None could say what would happen. Would there be a public funeral? Could there be a private funeral? What would the Marshal do? What did the family wish? Was it possible that a procession could pass through the streets of Paris without disturbance? And, in the agitated condition of public feeling, where would that end? To what might it not lead?

Everyone in Fontainebleau was disturbed, and in letters that came to us from Paris grave anxiety was expressed. The English newspapers also predicted an outbreak. Happily we had been going to Paris, and the news reached us at the railway station. We determined to see the funeral, cost what it might, and to take counsel with our Parisian friends. It is the custom of French Positivists to meet together on September 5 at the house where Auguste Comte lived and died, 10 Monsieur le Prince, and, after a commemorative discourse, to dine together at the Café Voltaire or some other restaurant in old Paris. These "banquets" are necessarily large, and the price of the dinner is a low one that working men and their wives may attend. The "banquet" promised that night to be more than usually interesting. We sat down nearly one hundred persons. I found myself next to a very pleasant young man, who might have been the *attaché* to an embassy. On the other side of him was a lady, a stranger to me, as was the young man. By-and-by the two began talking of the real art of making coffee, and I found that they differed quite seriously. "Well, but," said I, "madame must surely know more than you about the making of coffee, because she constantly has to make it, whereas you, I suppose, seldom do." "Pardon, madame," he answered with a bow, "*je suis cuisinier de mon état*,"

and he went on to explain that he had just been admitted to the Circle of the Cooks of Paris, a very select body, famous, as I afterwards learnt, not only for their standard of cooking, but also for their political sagacity.

I may mention here that, though my husband has been made honorary member of learned foreign societies, there is no diploma which he values more than that which makes him member of the *Cuisiniers de Paris*. I found my young cook most pleasant, well informed, and unassuming. We talked of the situation during dinner, as may be supposed. After the speeches were over, and we had drunk in silence, all standing, the toast of "*Les Morts*," the company broke up, and now was our opportunity to get information on the subject of the funeral. Happily our old friend, M. Magnin, was present. An aged workman, who had seen many political crises, engineer, mathematician, and man of science, he had been the trusted personal friend of Auguste Comte.

He said: "There will be no disturbance. The people of Paris are too sagacious to play into the hands of MacMahon and his pretender. We respect M. Thiers because he freed France of the foreigner. That was a great and distinguished service, and Frenchmen do not forget it; but," he continued, "there will be no enthusiasm. We shall all be there; all Paris will be in the streets as a mark of respect; but we do not forget the brutalities of the Versaillais. He was responsible. Trust me, there will be no enthusiasm."

"Well, but," said we, "that is a *nuance*, a delicate *nuance*. How can you be sure that your people will appreciate it, or will be able to act on it as a great public demonstration? See what the newspapers say!"

"The newspapers know nothing," he replied; "but I tell you, with absolute confidence, that thus it will be. Word

has gone round the workshops of Paris, and you will see." We did see.

The day of the funeral was beautifully bright and sunny; the whole of Paris was in the streets. Some friends had given us a window looking on to the procession, and early in the morning we took our places. It soon became difficult to move about. The street below us became a swaying mass. All the working men of Paris seemed to be out in blouses—some blue, some white. A very foolish conversation went on just behind me as to which were the more dangerous, the men in the blue or the white blouses. It was decided that the blue blouse was the sign of disorder, and whenever several blue blouses were to be seen together in the street below us "that means mischief," said my neighbors. In truth, it was a most impressive sight: the vast crowds, the uncovered heads, the absolute silence as the bier went by, bore testimony to the respect of the people. When at last the burly form of Gambetta, the President of the Chamber, was seen walking in front of the deputies, a faint cry of "*Vive Gambetta*!" was raised, but was not taken up, for, with both arms extended, he waved the people, as though saying, "Hush, enough! We bury our liberator." And so, with the whole of Paris to mourn him, their great citizen was carried to the grave, in all respect, as M. Magnin had said, but without enthusiasm. The elections that followed gave France a republic.

It is impossible to avoid contrasting in one's thoughts the uneventful, peaceful, and easy-going life of Englishmen in their island home with the fierce storm of emotions which swept over France after the war. Every thinking man and woman was then torn with rage, despair, and humiliation. Many of them had suffered the loss of their entire fortune, all had had losses, and mothers and wives had given the lives

of those dearest to them—for what? A very charming young Frenchwoman, whose husband was in the Garde Nationale, and was in all the sorties from Paris during the siege, said to me that, bitter as had been their punishment, the cup was not yet full.

Perhaps enough has not been made in Europe of the extraordinary recovery of France after all her disasters. Who can doubt that she is now richer, stronger, happier, better educated, with a more stable Government, and a more general feeling of content than at any time in the last hundred years? I have just returned from Paris, and am immensely struck by the appearance of *bien-être* and happiness which pervades all classes. France has recovered her self-respect; she possesses herself again, and the old gaiety and elasticity of spirits have come back. The traveller is once again *le bien venu*. The terri-

ble *affaire* has quieted down, and, as a clever Frenchwoman said to me, if we have had our Calas and our Dreyfus, at all events we have had veritable martyrs for the right. We have done what we could to make reparation. In all that *affaire* poor Dreyfus probably is still the most to be pitied. "I am not a man strong enough to stand as the symbol of truth and justice," he is reported to have said. But in spite of recent alleged discoveries the *affaire* is over, and has left the country stronger and wiser than before. Was it not Voltaire who spoke of France as the "whipped cream" of Europe? The grace, ease, and charm which were always hers she wears to-day with the consciousness that behind them are the solid qualities of hard work, a splendid fortitude, and a grand intellectual equipment.

The Cornhill Magazine.

THE SPOKESMAN OF DESPAIR.

"Art nowadays must be the mouth-piece of misery," says George Gissing in *The Unclassed*; and in these woeful words he sets forth the whole gospel of his Art, adding in the next sentence his view of life: "For misery is the keynote of modern life." Never writer wrote with deeper conviction than George Gissing; every sentence has come straight from the heart, and this fact alone, apart from its artistic merit, gives a poignancy and strength to his work which separates it at once from the common ruck of novel-writing. These books are terrible arraignment of life—their peculiar characteristic is this poignancy, this painting of life at its moments of unbearable crisis. Between misery and despair lies a whole world of difference: misery is what can

be endured—despair is the unbearable, and George Gissing is the spokesman of Despair.

A great many people ask what is the use of writing books of this kind, which only add to the misery of the world? And in one sense there is truth in the objection. So forcible, so appallingly real are these books that they do sensibly add to the sum total of misery, but looked at in another light they have their uses. There is a calousness, a grossness of fat living among the men and women of our day that calls aloud for cure: "For me," said a very rich man not long ago in the writer's hearing, "For me cold and poverty and hunger do not exist; I choose to forget that they are in the world." He glanced as he spoke over

his own richly furnished table, and continued his dinner. The food, strange to say, did not choke him, as it should have done. He was a not uncommon specimen of his class—a class which is increasing in our midst—it toils not, neither does it spin, and “chooses to forget” that the overwhelming majority of its fellows have to do both these things, and even with that have to want. The only way in which persons of this callous, mundane type can be influenced is by the gradual pressure of public opinion—and (lest authors despair) public opinion is largely and strongly influenced by books. Since novels of “purpose” came into being, for instance, it cannot be denied that philanthropy has become more fashionable; and although this may be a silliness, it is a useful folly which leads to a certain amount of sympathy with the suffering poor.

Now, though George Gissing was a true artist he sometimes allowed purpose to appear quite openly in his books—as we shall see when we examine them in detail. But side by side with the special purpose of each book, you will notice that he always takes a wider view. He is not content with pleading for one specially miserable class, or exhibiting the grievances of one trade or profession, for he wishes in short to be “the mouthpiece of misery,” and that necessitates more general views. The struggle for existence—the trampling of the weak by the strong, the pitiless pressure of circumstance, these are his continual themes. “*Il y a du sentiment, mais il n’y a pas de parti-pris,*” says Dick in *The Light that failed*, as he criticises Maisy’s picture; and this “parti-pris,” the lack of which spoils so much art, is the strong point of Gissing’s books; whether we agree with it or no, it gives distinction to his work. He has a certain view of life, knows what he wishes to describe, and does so, with the result that we

get a definite mental picture from his words. The special problem which Gissing sets forth in his books is that of poverty as it affects morality. On this theme he plays endless variations, which all lead up to the same conclusion: Poverty is the root of all evil. *Want, want, want*, the word has stamped itself on to this man’s brain, he never escapes from it. Sombre, almost uninteresting men and women fill these books, just such people as we meet every day and wonder why the Creator created them. This human creator of puppets has chosen these drab-colored types on purpose, and we wonder at his choice till we begin to perceive that this is the very essence of his art. The romance-writer selects striking figures for presentation, unusual types, daring and dramatic; but Gissing will have none of these. The world he describes is that of ordinary men and women, incapable of brilliant destinies, unoccupied by brave projects, just all striving, with pitiful and infinite struggles, to maintain a foothold on the earth they find themselves born into. Oh callous rich man, read these books, and think, and repent and give of your goods to feed the hungry! For here you will read strange *new* descriptions of want: this is not the ordinary view that we all know so well, which is bad enough and heartrending enough in its own way, but something far worse. Here you will read the effects of want on character instead of its effects on flesh. In considering this problem, a distinction must be made between Poverty which may be defined as a lack of luxuries, and Want which means a lack of necessities. The one is a bearable evil; in certain cases not an evil at all, while the other is an unbearable and unmitigated curse. This distinction has not been enough kept in sight by George Gissing in his impassioned tirades against our social system:

“The power of money,” he avers, “is

hard to realize; one who has never had it, marvels at the completeness with which it transforms every detail of life . . . *between wealth and poverty is just the difference between the whole and the maimed.*" Again he asserts:

Poverty is the root of all social ills, its existence accounts even for the ills that are from wealth. The poor man is a man laboring in fetters. I declare there is no word in our language which sounds so hideous to me as poverty. . . . poverty will make the best people bad if it gets hard enough. . . . Some great and noble sorrow may have the effect of drawing hearts together; but to struggle against destitution, to be crushed by care about shillings and sixpences, *that must always degrade.*

This is not the truth: care about shillings and sixpences has drawn many hearts together, as every genuine necessary human interest will: there is nothing degrading in the struggle against destitution, it implies a desire for independence, and an effort towards a higher level of existence. It is only when the destitute man ceases to struggle that his degradation begins.

But this view of the case seems to have been curiously overlooked by George Gissing. He assures us over and over again that poverty is entirely degrading, and quotes the delicious cleverness of Johnson to defend his position: "Sir," said Johnson, "all the arguments which are brought to represent poverty as no evil show it to be evidently a great evil. You never find people laboring to convince you that you can live very happily upon a plentiful fortune." The quotation, however, does not quite help out Gissing's theory. For, although Johnson speaks of poverty as an evil, he does not say that men must be degraded in character by it—any more than they must be by the physical evil of disease; that both are evils no one will deny; the question is, whether by a heroic attitude towards

them character may not be strengthened instead of weakened? It would be difficult, I fancy, to produce evidence to prove that any character has ever been spoilt by an honest struggle against any evil—be it poverty, disease, or sin. Even if the struggle ends in failure something remains, were it nothing but the having attempted. Gissing cannot take this comforting view; the lost battle is to him lost indeed; he thinks it worse to struggle and fall than never to struggle at all. A peculiar bitterness belongs to his view of poverty:

You tell me that money cannot buy the things most precious. Your commonplace proves that you have never known the lack of it. When I think of all the sorrow and the barrenness that has been wrought in my life by want of a few more pounds per annum than I was able to earn, I stand aghast at money's significance. What kindly joys have I lost, those simple forms of happiness to which every heart has claim, because of poverty! Meetings with those I loved made impossible year by year; sadness, misunderstanding, nay, cruel alienation arising from inability to do the things I wished, and which I might have done had a little money helped me. . . . *I have lost friends merely through the constraints of my position . . . solitude of the bitter kind, the solitude which is enforced at times when mind and heart longs for companionship, often cursed my life solely because I was poor. I think it would scarce be an exaggeration to say that there is no moral good which has not to be paid for in coin of the realm.*—*Private Papers of Henry Ryecroft*, p. 15.

This astonishing statement sums up Gissing's view of life. Here again he seems to us to confuse between poverty and want. The man who suffers dire and abject want must indeed necessarily find himself in a position where it is difficult to maintain friendships; but to say that a mere lack of luxuries,

or even comforts of living, must separate friends is an absurdity. This morbid stress which he lays upon the decorums and conventions of existence is very characteristic of Gissing. He mentions, for instance, as a great hardship the fact that a hardworking journalistic family have no servant, and therefore the mistress of the house "had herself to carry in the joint." This humiliating incident seems to Gissing to cut off this poor family from all reasonable intercourse with their class. The same morbid pride is described constantly in Gissing's books as being felt by all self-respecting and poor men—if they cannot entertain their friends as they would like to, they will not entertain them at all. Gissing seems to forget how often the stalled ox has dulness therewith; and that the dinner of herbs where love is may be the finest feast in the world.

But, having cavilled so much to begin with at Gissing's theories, let us see how he works them out. A long list of novels stands against George Gissing's name. *The Unclassed*, *Demos*, *Thyrza*, *New Grub Street*, *The Odd Women*, *The Nether World*, *The Crown of Life*, and *The Private Papers of Henry Ryecroft*, are the best known among them. As I have said above, all these books are more or less an elaborate analysis of character as it is affected by poverty; and to explain his theories Gissing has worked out the problem as it affects widely differing groups of characters.

It is difficult for a writer to speak dispassionately of *New Grub Street*, for this terrible book describes the author's nightmare—the slow murder, by care and overwork, of the priceless gift of artistic imagination. Worse far than any realistic description of physical disease and suffering is this pitiless, unvarnished account of the death of Edward Reardon's powers. The only thing I know in literature at all anal-

ogous to it is Tolstol's *Death of Ivan Illiatch*. With much the same professional calm which Tolstol employs in describing the slow on-coming of physical death, Gissing analyses the steady decay of Reardon's powers.

Let every aspirant to literature read *New Grub Street* and be warned—the book, rightly considered, might avert many a tragedy:

I am at the mercy of my brain [poor Reardon cries], it is dry and powerless. How I envy the clerks who go to their offices in the morning! There's the day's work cut out for them, no question of mood or feeling. What an insane thing it is to make literature one's only means of support! When the most trivial accident may at any time prove fatal to one's power of work for weeks or months. No, that's the unpardonable sin! To make a trade of an art. I am rightly served for attempting such a brutal folly.

The story is worked out with pitiless sincerity. Reardon, at first, has high ideals of his art, and refuses to lower them; then the screw of poverty is turned on harder and harder; his wife urges him to write more "popular" books, and reproaches him cruelly because he hesitates to do so. At last Reardon dies of misery and overwork. The moral is obvious: high ideals of artistic work *will not buy bread*; and if you want that you must sell your soul to buy it.

Now, in all this there is much that is sadly and indisputably true; but Gissing does not, perhaps, quite enough realize another truth about art—as surely as art will not buy bread, so fulness of bread will not buy art. For this is indeed a flower that blossoms in the dust; ease and luxury and the joys of living—the proverbial "sunshine and prosperity"—is not needed to forward its growth. It would be interesting to collect statistics as to how many genuine works of literary art have been

produced in easy circumstances; I venture to say that an overwhelming majority have sprung from the reverse of comfort, and a goodly number came into being while the wolf was scraping at the door. But this is a view of the case which Gissing never takes. He seems, indeed, to think that affluence, or at least entire freedom from sordid cares, would create artistic work. The mistake he makes here is, I think, in not quite enough taking into account the average artistic temperament. Reardon, his type of the literary artist, is a man of painfully morbid sensitivities, entirely without that *joie de vivre* which is part of the artistic nature. He is incapable of enjoying the passing moment, because he is living in fear of future want—every little discomfort of poverty tortures him, and he exaggerates the fancied humiliations of lack of money in a ridiculous manner. The average man of letters has more of the Bohemian in him, living happily in the present, not looking apprehensively to the future, and not minding the "degradations" of poverty one whit. These very solid compensations of the artistic nature are entirely left out of court by Gissing in his study of the literary artist, with the result that the study is one-sided. That there are sensitive natures of the Reardon type is, of course, only too true, and, in selecting such a man as his type of the literary artist, Gissing has stated the case as extremely as it is possible to state it; but even here the picture is one-sided. For if the artist suffers, he also enjoys certain pleasures which the ordinary man can never experience: to him belong moments of creative ecstasy compared with which every common pleasure must appear cheap and worthless. This bliss of creation is never mentioned in Gissing's sombre picture of the artist's life; the pride and glory of attainment, too, are overlooked: "If I had to choose between a glorious repu-

tation and poetry, and a contemptible popularity with wealth, I should choose the latter," says Reardon. It is strange that a man like Gissing, who so evidently possessed the artist nature, should take these sordid views of his calling. But so it is. Again and again we meet the same old complaint. Moreover, the joys of creation are lightly esteemed by him, and the toll of the craft seems to oppress him constantly. Would many authors write thus of their pen? "Old companion—yet old enemy! How many times have I taken it up, loathing the necessity, heavy in head and heart, my hand shaking, my eyes sick-dazzled?" And once again he writes of the dark side of the writing life:

I dare not think of those I have left behind me there in the ink-stained world. It would make me miserable, and to what purpose? . . . Oh, you heavy laden, who at their hour sit down to the cursed travail of the pen; writing, not because there is anything in your mind, in your heart, which needs to be uttered, but because the pen is the only tool you can handle, your only means of earning bread! . . . With a lifetime of dread experience behind me, I say that he who encourages any young man or woman to look for his living to "literature" commits no less than a crime. . . . Hateful as is the struggle for life in every form, this rough and tumble of the literary arena seems to me sordid and degrading beyond all others. Oh, your prices per thousand words! Oh, your paragraphings and your interviewings! And oh, the black despair that awaits those down trodden in the fray!

This is true, every word of it, granting two conditions—firstly that unsuitable people try to pursue the calling of letters, and secondly if they are fools enough to suppose they can support themselves by it. There is drudgery in every profession—but not more in literature than in any other—always provid-

ing that it is followed by suitable persons. The element of drudgery comes in when books have to be *made* instead of being created, or rather coming into being by themselves. *New Grub Street* is a much-needed protest against this increasing evil of book manufacture. Eloquent, powerful, sincere, it stands high among Gissing's many and clever books; but in it the half only is told, and that the dark half. Many a heavy hour has been lightened, many a care forgotten, when the author, turning away from the painful present, enters the happy world of imagination.

The Odd Women—one of Gissing's best books—deals with the question of poverty as it affects women. No one who has read this book will ever forget it—no woman at least. Some men may call the picture exaggerated; but if they do, it is ignorance that makes them say so. For the pen cannot well exaggerate the sufferings of a certain helpless class of woman when she is left in poverty. This is the class that Gissing, with admirable feeling for truth, has chosen as his subject. The odd women are the *unnecessary* women of the world: those for whom there seems no niche prepared in life—no work, no husbands, no hope or help. Created we know not why, and living on we know not wherefore, they present one of the sorriest problems of the universe.

Gissing chooses a typical family of daughters for the subject of his book. They are ill-educated, delicate and unenterprising—and they are thrown upon the world, poor and helpless, to make their living in it. How do they do this? They starve and pinch and struggle—their sufferings degrade them body and soul; the youngest and best looking contracts a sordid marriage that is the merest selling of her person to escape from the poverty that is killing her; the second sister in her despair begins to drink, and the eldest struggles on as a barely paid nursery governess.

The whole picture is appallingly true and unexaggerated: there are thousands of such women to-day living out life-stories quite as hopeless.

Now Gissing's object in writing this book was to prove that this "ragged regiment" (as he calls it) is a social ill which may be combated by certain measures. He is a vehement advocate for careers, professions or trades for women. All women cannot marry, few have money, but each may, he asserts, have some well-paid calling. There are two female reformers in the book, who found a technical school of a sort, and there try to educate their sex for useful professions: the two reformers discuss the luckless heroines of the book in the following terms:

"The family is branded. They belong to the class we know so well—with no social position, and unable to win an individual one. I must find a name for that ragged regiment."

Miss Barfoot regarded her friend thoughtfully.

"Rhoda, what comfort have you for the poor in spirit?" she asked.

"None whatever, I'm afraid—my mission is not to them—I'm glad it's not my task to release them."

This quotation exactly shows the fault of the book: it is written to suggest a solution of a certain problem, and never faces it. For it is the "ragged regiment" that need help—and exactly this class that it is all but impossible to reach by the means which Gissing suggests. The ineffectuality that characterizes the type foredooms it to continuance. This Gissing does not sufficiently admit. He seems to think that training in business habits and general education will eliminate the ineffectuality and helplessness from women of this kind. Now it may do something, but no amount of training will convert the typical odd woman into a capable responsible being—she cannot escape from herself. Character,

not circumstance, creates the odd woman. Moreover, Gissing's suggestions for careers are not very good. He has a great belief in typewriting for women, also in office work and clerkships. In suggesting these occupations he either did not realize, or else ignored, all the objections that exist to them as callings for women; as, for instance, the crowding out of men from their natural employments, thus making it less possible for them to support wives; or the lowering of wages that comes in with woman workers; or the unwholesomeness of long office hours, so trying to the health of women. All these evils Gissing passes over.

As a solution of the problem it attempts to grapple with then, *The Odd Women* is not successful; but as a bit of literature the book stands by itself. The opening chapters, which describe the life of the sisters in their London garret, are unforgettable. Notice the Balzac-like touches: the "vegetarian" diet "advised by the doctor"; their early hours because "lamp oil was costly, and indeed they felt pleased to say as early as possible that another day was done"; their calculations of ways and means where the margin was so narrow that every possible contingency was terrible to them:

Alice reached the house by half-past one, bringing in a paper-bag something which was to serve for dinner. She had a wretched appearance. Her head ached worse than ever. "Virgie," she moaned, "we never took account of illness in our calculations."

"Oh, we must keep that off," replied the other, sitting down with a look of exhaustion.

"Yes, I must struggle against it. We will have dinner as soon as possible. I feel faint."

If both of them had avowed their faintness as often as they felt it, the complaint would have been perpetual. But they generally made a point of deceiving each other, or tried to delude themselves; professing that no diet

could be better for their peculiar wants than this which poverty imposed. "Ah! it's a good sign to be hungry," exclaimed Virginia, "you'll be better this afternoon, dear."

Alice turned over the *Christian Year* and endeavored to console herself out of it, while her sister prepared the meal. . . . After a dinner of mashed potatoes and milk ("The Irish peasantry live entirely on that," croaked Alice, "and they are physically a strong race") the younger sister started on her walk.

The whole picture of these luckless women is etched in with hundreds of fine unerring strokes. That a man should have been able to write all these pitiful secrets of woman's life is a remarkable instance of artistic intuition: the true artist does not need to have himself experience all that he writes about—something in him (some sixth sense) makes known to him the secrets of other hearts. No underfed, anxious woman could have written with more convincing accuracy than Gissing the history of these sisters' struggles—he might have been an Odd Woman to judge by his knowledge of her ways.

Now perhaps some readers will object that this is not art—this painful depiction of pitiful lives and characters. And it must be at once admitted that it is not the greatest art; but, by reason of its truthfulness and power, it is unquestionably art. For you can make a picture out of anything if you are a sufficiently clever painter; but you may produce a mere daub of the grandest subject if you are an amateur. Art, in fact, is treatment far more than subject; though both must be combined to achieve great results.

Gissing has chosen, in all his books, to paint low, sad types of humanity. But so excellent is his treatment of these types that they only exhibit his cleverness in handling them as he does. It is not every one who could have made the story of three futile, charac-

terless, unimportant women absorbingly interesting. To have done so is an achievement. Farther, though the book may not have solved the "odd woman" problem, it must have done much towards rousing attention on their behalf.

Next in rank to *New Grub Street* and *The Odd Women* is *The Nether World*—that nightmare book. As its name signifies, it concerns slum-life. There is scarcely a ray of light in it from beginning to end; but you will find, if your heart does not fall before the task of reading such painful scenes, very wonderful descriptions in these dark pages. One chapter descriptive of a London Bank Holiday is a marvelous bit of writing. Here you get Gissing's true view of modern life—than which nothing can be more despairing. He does not think that there is any cure for the evils of our social system, unless, indeed, it is the drastic remedy of leaving things alone till, by their own weight of evil, they exterminate themselves. This hideous welter of low, worn-out creatures which is collectively known as the slums, cannot be of long continuance by its very nature. Another two generations unrecruited from country blood, and the breed will be too exhausted to continue itself. Better perhaps to attempt no amelioration of these hideous conditions. But yet Gissing will have his readers hear of these shameful evils. To read *The Nether World* is like gazing at a mass of corruption—often you will turn away from the printed page, almost ashamed to read. Has poor human nature really fallen as low as this? you ask, and blush for it if it has. Poverty is again the keynote here—or rather want of the direst kind. Every one in the book is struggling for bread, few can get even a crust. Respectability cannot earn a living wage; you must not blame men who try to earn it less honestly—and for the women, those of

them that would keep their good name must starve and starve, and work their poor fingers raw even for the food to starve upon. Why write about these horrors is a question always asked when such a book as *The Nether World* is published? That such things are, is quite a sufficient justification for writing about them. Gissing was gifted with the insight necessary for such a task, and with a power of description that could make the most lurid scenes real to his readers. His sympathy with want is quite terrible in its intensity. Have you ever been hungry?—if not, and if you wish to know what it feels like, read *The Nether World*. There you will come to know the long-drawn out, pitiful, animal conditions of semi-starvation that has gone on for years. You will almost understand how a man would sell his soul for a morsel of bread; you will see how the spiritual side of things may disappear altogether before this struggle for the earthly necessities. Perhaps, after reading *The Nether World* you will even think once or twice about your poor neighbors; if so, the book was not written in vain.

I cannot here speak particularly of Gissing's less noteworthy novels—such as *Demos*, *The Unclassed*, *Thyrza*, *The Whirlpool*, or *The Crown of Life*; nor can I find space to do justice to his study of Charles Dickens, a remarkable bit of criticism that makes us regret we have not more like it.

But two last efforts of Gissing's genius remain to be considered. *The Private Papers of Henry Ryecroft*, published shortly before his death, seems to sum up the whole of his life work. It is his most artistic book: there are passages of exquisite beauty in it, and yet sad as his other books were this last seems saddest of all. With only a thin disguise of fiction, we read here all the sorrowful secrets of the writer's life—his long struggles with poverty and unsucccess—his ill-health, his loneli-

ness, and above all, the profound melancholy of his temperament.

"My life," he says here, "has been merely tentative, a broken series of false starts and hopeless new beginnings."

We, the grateful readers of Gissing's many and valuable books, cannot think this a true estimate; it seems to us that he accomplished much. But a very curious experiment in art was to be Gissing's last attempt.

Veranilda, his posthumous novel which has just now appeared, breaks away completely from all his previous work into the domain of historical romance.

Is this a successful attempt?

It seems, to the writer, that *Veranilda* might have been the forerunner of other and more successful work of the same kind if Gissing had lived. It is manifestly an experiment. The artist is working in unknown material, he has not quite got over the technical difficulties of it. These must have been grave, and almost impossibly hampering. For if you have written for twenty-five years about modern men and women it would seem terribly unnatural to begin to write about Romans and Goths of the year A.D. 600! Too manifestly the imagination has been strained to accomplish this feat; too plainly the writer is translating the talk of modern men and women back into the more dignified speech of the Roman world. Yet when this is allowed, we catch a curious glimpse of Gissing the man behind it all—the lover of the world beautiful, the passionate admirer of heroism, the seeker after peace. These qualities were all revealed in quite another manner in the old books, by his loathing of the squalid, and his horror of the conditions under which half the world has now to live. Only the lover of beauty

could have shown up as he did the ugliness and degradation of modern life. It is, therefore, no surprise to attentive readers of Gissing's earlier work, that *Veranilda* should exhibit these qualities. The former books were not a gloating upon the hideous aspect of life, but a revolt from them—the bitter protest of a man who saw only too clearly what life should be under happier conditions.

Veranilda reproduces with careful anxiety (too careful) all the picturesque exterior of the ancient world; no detail is spared, as with loving admiration Gissing dwells on the splendid past and all its gorgeous trappings. But in spite of this wealth of detail, the picture remains unconvincing; or perhaps it is because the letter of the ancient world has been more insisted upon than the spirit of it. That, somehow, seems to have eluded the laboring pen that strove so hard to fix it to the page. We do not find here the bite of reality: something is wanting—reality—or else higher imaginative powers than Gissing possessed. As we have seen, his imagination could interpret for him all the secrets of worn-out, miserable womanhood; but to enter into the feelings of an ancient Roman citizen and a Gothic maiden is a more difficult task. Frankly, the writer cannot think that *Veranilda* has the same excellences that distinguish Gissing's earlier work. It is an interesting experiment, a careful attempt; but it lacks vitality.

The inherent justice of things makes it perhaps better that Gissing's first books should remain his most lasting memorial.

These children of the soul, conceived in bitterness and brought forth with anguish, should by rights rank before this later-born, the fruit, we are told, of leisure and greater prosperity.

Jane H. Findlater.

THE TRAGEDY OF HOUGOMONT.

"Antoinette! Hist!"

Something in the hiss of the last word made Antoinette pause and suddenly place the pail of water she was carrying on the ground. There was just light enough left in the stormy sky above the château for her to see that something, or some one, was lurking in the shadow behind the farm-door.

"Who is it?" she demanded without moving, her voice stilled suddenly. Then a long, lean hand touched her from the dusk, and the girl shivered from head to foot.

"François! Is it you?"

"Yes, it is François. Is there any one within? I am starving."

She closed the door hastily and shot the bolt, acting with a swift haste and precision. Her pretty face had whitened; her hands trembled. She passed through an outer kitchen, and then the two stood in an inner room, across the quaint, low window of which a screen of green leaves was tapping and swaying in the wind. A coming storm was in the air; a curious, dull haze brooded over Hougomont. The château, the orchards, the lane, the farm, the little chapel, seemed to stand in a white oasis of light, round which was gathering a murky pall of violet-black. The leaves, tapping restlessly, seemed to shiver together, and Antoinette heard them as if they were heart-beats, as she stood facing the soldier before her.

"How is it," she breathed then, "that you are here? The English are all around—outside, everywhere! On the orchard-wall they are barricading—they are swarming in the orchard. And the seigneur has gone to Brussels. Only Jean and I are left in charge."

"So I heard," he said coolly; "you and Jean! When did you give in, and marry Jean?"

She drew back at that, flushed and trembling. Her voice came in a low, shamed whisper:

"Last spring. We were starving! My father was dying! And you—you never wrote! They told me you were with the Emperor; that you had forgotten me. They told me there was another—that you were married; that you made mock of Belgian girls!"

"And you believed it all? Well, no matter, since it is all over and done."

He sat down by the white, well-scrubbed table, and stretched out his legs.

"I am too hungry to be sentimental or to talk of love! Fetch me bread, Antoinette, and wine. I have hidden all day in the farm-buildings, and heard these English talk. I have news now for M. le Général. Perhaps I shall see the Emperor. But I wanted a peep of you, and now you must hide me till they sleep, and I can escape by the orchard-wall. Bread! Bread! I have a wolf, here inside."

He waved his hand impatiently, and Antoinette ran to the dresser and pulled out a long loaf, a piece of Gruyère cheese, and a flagon of red wine. She stood trembling while the French soldier ate and drank, starting at every sound; but when he put out his hand and would have drawn her to him, she shivered again. Once they had loved; he was half-French, half-Belgian, and had fought with the Emperor in many of his battles, and she had looked up to him as a hero. She had never loved honest Jean Baptiste, because of François; but she was too terrified to think of love and dalliance now.

"Make haste, François! At any moment they may come in—Jean may come in!"

"And then?"

"They would see you, and take you prisoner. Spies are shot!"

"I would die hard," he said coolly, looking round the room. It was bare, save for the tables, two benches, and a high, carved clock of light oak which stood against the wall. On the mantelpiece was a small image of the Virgin, and under it Antoinette's rosary. "I would shoot him, this thieving Jean!" he said abruptly then, his gaze wandering over her slim figure and sunny, loosened hair. "I will be equal with him some day."

She was desirable, suddenly, in his eyes, this little Belgian girl, to whom he had once been betrothed, but whom he had almost forgotten in the excitement of his life, till he found she could be of use to him as *châtelaine* of Hougomont. Her frightened eyes, too, were like the forget-me-not he had seen in the orchard ditch that day.

"I hate him because he took you from me! I hate him!" he said.

"Jean is good," Antoinette whispered under her breath. "Though I do not love him, he is good. And you, François— Ah, *mon Dieu!* here they come!"

Tall figures were passing the window. A loud rat-tat sounded on the door. François rose and coolly moved the clock, placing himself behind it in the shadow. He was inured to danger, and the kitchen would be badly lit. He had been in tighter places than this.

"Let them in," he said carelessly. "When all is dark I can slip out to the outhouses, and so over the orchard-wall. One kiss! No? You are shy."

He could even laugh carelessly. Antoinette looked at him as if half-fascinated, half-terrified. She hastily put away the remains of the meal, and went to the door. In another moment the kitchen was full of English soldiers, Jean Baptiste meeting them as they entered from the courtyard.

He was a tall Belgian, with a quiet,

resolute face and calm, gray eyes. Antoinette looked up with a strange sense of relief as he stood between her and the soldiers and helped her to lay the table. Jean was good, though she did not love him—he was good!

Yet all this time her heart thudded against her side. She scarcely dared glance at the tall clock. Oh, if they saw him! If they killed him there, before her eyes! François, whose gay, careless courage and laughing eyes had won her heart, the cool touch of whose lean hand had seemed to reach her with the power of an electric current—François, whom she loved!

The soldiers talked and laughed. To-morrow they would teach "Boney" a lesson; to-morrow the French would fly as chaff before the wind. The storm, they said, was coming fast; the clouds lowered dark and near; low peals of thunder were muttering in the distance. All around, the British were making bivouac, the villagers coming in with billets of wood to keep their fires alive. Soldiers rested everywhere, some under bushes, some in straw stolen from the farmhouses. Old campaigners had rigged up blanket on bayonet; but the bulk of the army lay unsheltered under the lowering, threatening sky. Across the valley the French had hidden their fires; but they were reflected in the gloomy canopy overhead in a dull red glow. At Caillon the Emperor supped late with his staff. Antoinette listened to the talk of the soldiers, sick at heart. Once, when they mentioned the orchard barricades and the high platform over the gate, and declared that there was not a loophole now by which the enemy could enter, she thought she heard a movement behind the clock; but at last they were gone, and she and Jean were left alone. He said he would go on to bed, as he had been up since dawn; and Antoinette worked on, scarcely answering. He lingered for a little, look-

ing at her, then went away. When at last she stood in the room alone, blowing out all the candles, the rain was falling in deluges, and tremendous peals of heaven's artillery rolled overhead. The night was one of terror. Terror was in her heart. How would François escape? How could he? There was not a loophole unguarded in Hougomont. She knew from the English soldiers' words that every crevice was occupied; the wall by which he had hoped to escape was lined with men armed to the teeth. He was in a trap—a trap of steel.

He came out as she stood waiting, and taking her hand, whispered that he would hide in the barn. He knew a place behind the hay-rick. And next day the French would take the farm; they would chase out these rats of English, and burn Hougomont to the ground. He would save her if he could. Nothing and no one ever resisted the French and the Emperor! But now, in case Jean returned, let them start for the barn.

Antoinette, breathless and trembling, stole out to reconnoitre. The soldiers lay everywhere, thick as bees, crouching on every side under their blankets, under the trees in the orchard, in the shelter of the walls, but all weary, all in a dead sleep. François stepped between them with a careless smile. In the dark he would only have been taken for a late patrol. At the door of the barn, which Antoinette unlocked, he paused to put his arm round her waist. For a moment she yielded, and a tall man who had crept on to the rough platform above the gate with a lantern to fetch some forgotten tools saw them stand thus, the girl's white face illumined by a blinding flash of lightning.

"If we win to-morrow, Antoinette"

—
François kissed her then. His breath scorched her cheek.

"But you will not win."

She drew back. She had learned to hate and dread Napoleon.

"We always win where *he* goes—always. You shall see. I shall make you my prisoner of war. Little Antoinette! He, Jean, will be killed. The Little Corporal will not leave a soul alive in Hougomont."

Some one stirred in the dark. François crept noiselessly into the barn and behind the hay-rick. Antoinette waited till there was silence; then she too moved away. For a moment she had rested her head on his shoulder, felt his kiss; she had been disloyal! And though she had not loved Jean, she had never meant— She stood still in the pouring rain and shivered. The dark silhouette of the little chapel was before her, and she crept in. War, and the terror of war, was all around. A cloud, as of blood, obscured her eyes, but she could see a candle burning on the stand before the white image of Christ hanging above the door, and another was before the Virgin on the altar. The tiny chapel was the one place in all the earth, she felt, in which there was peace; and yet, even here, soldiers lay in heavy slumber all around. She crept between their silent figures, and fell on her knees before the little, rude wooden image.

"Holy Mother, forgive me! Mother of all sorrows! Sinless Mary! I am Jean's wife, and François has kissed me, and now I feel far from thee."

She wept as she whispered; the tears rained down her face. Outside, the thunder roared and muttered, heaven's great artillery mocking the feeble imitation of yesterday. Splitting, blinding swords of light played over the battlefield, and the summer woods, and the ripe corn soon to be trodden down and drenched with blood. At last a quiet hand touched her shoulder.

"Antoinette, there is a time to sleep and a time to pray. Come, *petite!*

And to-morrow—we know not what to-morrow brings—perhaps for you hope—deliverance!”

Jean's grave, kindly face. What did he mean?

He stood, tall and serene, waiting. He did not touch her. But he followed the light figure closely when she stepped between the sleeping men, and he watched, later, till her fair head was on the pillow and she slept, worn out. His love for her was an adoration. Then he moved to the bed, and stood looking down at the small face pitifully.

“I saw she had hidden some one behind the clock. I saw the edge of his sleeve, and it was a French coat! The man she told me of was French. He is hidden *here!* Poor child! Poor child!”

In her sleep Antoinette tossed her arms.

“Jean!” she cried. “He is good, but I do not love him!”

He went back to the window with a stifled groan. He sat there till dawn, the coming battle forgotten, the storm, the morrow's tragedy.

Dawn, a cheerless dawn, found him still there, fighting his own battle.

And over at Caillon, Napoleon had risen, gray of face, with only life in his blazing eyes and steely lips, to see if his enemy lay still in his grasp.

He cried with delight when the red light on either side of Mont Saint Jean showed him the English were still there, “in the hollow of his hand.” The light was obscured, and it was only half-past three when the dawn broke over sodden fields, and dripping woods, and plashy ground, and deep, secret pools. The air was filled with mist; between the two armies stood watchful sentries and vedettes. No other sign of life broke the gray, dreary expanse. It was a day that broke in tears, that crept shamefaced and trembling from the womb of night.

And then, about six, for the last time, thousands and thousands woke to look upon an earthly dawn. They would see it again nevermore.

The two mighty armies stirred, and men, blue, cold, wet, unshaven, looked up to the pitiless sky. Then, rousing to life, they began to carry wood, to light fires, to feed horses. The sound rolled over Waterloo. It was “like the sound of a great sea beating on a rocky shore”—the sea of life that was so soon to beat against the rocky shores of death.

II.

It was twenty minutes past eleven before the first gun broke the deadly stillness of the 18th of June 1815. The storm was past for the present; but a dull, slumberous heat, a sullen massing of clouds over the battlefield, seemed to betoken that it only waited to break forth once more.

Antoinette had been busy all the morning, going about with a dull, leaden weight at her heart.

She had no time, however, to think or to pray. There were many to cook for; the whole place swarmed with English soldiers. Antoinette shuddered when she remembered the hole behind the hay-rick in the barn, where François lay. There, indeed, he must lie, unless he courted death, till the French conquered and took Hougomont, or till night hid foe from friend or friend from foe. It was about twelve, and she was busy cooking in the kitchen, when a soldier touched her arm, and pointed through the window to the strip of orchard which ran behind it. There she could just see an officer on a chestnut horse; he wore a blue Spanish cape, white cravat, white buckskins, and plain cocked hat, and was pointing to the château, giving an order briefly and sternly. Antoinette had a fleeting vision of a high Roman nose, keen eagle eyes, and a firm mouth.

"Who is it?" she whispered.

"The Duke—the one man in England who is a match for Boney, and the man who will lick him to-day." He laughed grimly. "Come, don't look so white, madame; you ain't French, though you do use the lingo."

After that Antoinette was called hither and thither. Already there had been fighting in the orchard. The enemy had attempted to storm it from the narrow lane outside, and had been met by a devastating hail of bullets from the loopholed wall. One or two wounded had been carried in. She shuddered as she looked, and then she set her teeth. It was as well. The small, pinched, girlish face was to look as if cut from marble before the day was done. These were only the first few pattering hailstones of the storm. Her eyes were to grow used to horror. The wood, the lane, and the thicket were now full of French; they stormed over the wall, and fell in hundreds in the orchard; they forced their way through the thicket, cheering loudly, but were checked at the hedge that belched forth fire. Still they pressed on dauntlessly, and could then see the red brick wall of the farm, for which they made with wild cries of rage and triumph. Already their leader was springing for hand-hold when the wall seemed to grow alive with fire; bullets fell like rain from above, from every side, and with yells and choking moans they fell back, tier upon tier of slain crashing one on the other, till there was a heap of dead and dying, over which their maddened comrades leaped and raced, stumbled and fell.

But that was only the first repulse. They swarmed up in an unending stream, desperate with valor, wild with rage; the wood was captured, then lost; taken again, and retaken. A fierce cannonade had deepened along the whole line of Hougomont; the place was a red-hot hell of shot and shell. On all

sides it was besieged: house, kitchen-garden, ravine, flower-garden, were crowded with the enemy. Hay-ricks blazed, white smoke curling up to the gray of the sky. The grass of the orchard was blood-stained—a charnel-house. The ditch in the lane outside was choked with dead, and still the French poured in, a ceaseless stream, unconquerable, undefeated, dauntless, and desperate.

Antoinette had not a moment to think. The wounded lay everywhere; the courtyard was full; the château was burning. She was called hither and thither, working under the direction of the surgeon, and feeling that all life had stopped short just here; that she had never known before what life could be—what death could be.

A blood-red mist swam before her eyes as the terrible hours wore on, and still that wild stream of soldiers fought and died, locked together in a deadly embrace. She had almost lost sight of time at last, when she fell back against the wall, faint and giddy, and felt some one put a cup to her lips.

Jean, blood-stained and dirty, his shirt torn, a bandage round his head, was holding wine to her lips with the old quiet look.

"Drink, *petite*," he said. "You will need all your strength, for the day is not done yet. The English bulldog never gives way."

That was like Jean. She knew he had worked since the battle began, bringing in the wounded, exposing himself to a storm of French bullets on the wall, quietly reckless of danger. She had seen him often, but had never spoken to him. It was he who seized the first shell that fell on the château-roof and flung it over on the grass; but the château blazed now, unchecked, and all they could do was to try to prevent the flames from reaching the chapel and the farm.

Reckless deeds of valor passed unnoticed. Jean had courted death a hundred times that day, and yet not met it; only, the wounded blessed the strong man with the grave, white face who carried them so tenderly across the lane of fire, and seemed to know no fear.

Now he looked at Antoinette steadily for a minute, as if thinking deeply. Then he drew near, and whispered in her ear. It was a whisper that penetrated through the tornado, and seemed to stand out in letters of fire on her brain:

"Antoinette, I know who is behind the hay-rick! I saw him. If the château is ours till dark—and I think it will be—he will be caught. The French will never take Hougomont, though they may burn us out. Take him the coat of yonder dead English soldier. He could escape dressed in that till he reached the orchard-hedge; he could fling it off when he was free. At least he can die fighting, not sabred like a rat in a hole or hung as a spy."

She shuddered violently. Then, as Jean moved away, she took the coat of the dead soldier and stepped through the groaning heaps of dying and dead into the barn and behind the hay-rick. François was there, lying with burning, glaring eyes. How was it going? Were the French not in yet? Where was the Emperor? How did the day go?

"I do not know," Antoinette said vacantly. "Only they have not taken Hougomont, and they will not; though the château is on fire, and I think it is like a hell all around. In the lane behind the orchard the French lie thick, piles and piles of dead, staring at one with their awful eyes. I saw them from the wall, thicker than the apples lie in October. But listen! Put on this coat. You can escape with it through the hedge. Here is a British rifle. At least you can die in the open."

He seized the coat with an exclamation, forgetting to thank her. He donned it hastily, making a wry face at the blood with which it was besmeared. Then he took her hand, but it dropped lifelessly from his. Love! This was no time for love—or sin! This was Purgatory—the flames of Purgatory!

He was gone.

.
She stole out then, and resumed her work. Had he crept through the gap in the hedge? Was he safe?

All thought grew slow and torpid. She felt now as if the battle had lasted all her life, as if she had known nothing but these awful yells and cries, the hiss of shells, the crackling of flames, the moans of the dying, the still, white faces of the dead. Some one said that the French were giving way at last. Dusk was falling, though here, under the red glare of the flames of the burning château, there seemed no dusk, no twilight—only a red, red light of battle. Then at last, sick, giddy, and trembling, she crept into the shelter of the chapel, feeling that she was about to die, as if life and courage could bear no more.

The chapel stands just beside the château walls, but just under the pierced feet of the dead Christ the flames had stopped as if arrested. The wounded lay all around. She would have had to pick her way up to the little altar, where a posy of lilies she had placed there yesterday was splashed with blood. She was standing looking up at the pale face of the Christ, the head sunk forward on the breast, the eyes half-closed, as if in woe unspeakable, when a faint call reached her, and she stooped at once to see the ghastly face of one of the farm-servants lying at her feet.

"Madame," he whispered faintly, "over there—see see—your husband!"

"Jean?"

"Yes."

"Where?"

At first she could not see, till the wounded man, leaning on his elbow, caught her dress.

"Over there, near the altar. He was carried in with a bad sabre-wound. The surgeon bandaged him, and left him. And then I, from my place here, saw a devil of an English soldier *cut the bandage!* He has bled to death. I could not move; I cried out, but no one heard."

"An English soldier?"

"He wore the uniform," the other murmured; "but I think he was a spy. He and I were the only conscious men here, and I heard him swear in French as he crept out of the door."

He had pointed towards a man in the corner, and Antoinette reeled dizzily towards that spot. She had taken in all that was said. *She knew whose hand had cut the bandage!* He had sworn to be equal with Jean. And Jean had bled to death!

She was down on her knees then by the tall figure; the pale face rested back on the rude clay of the floor, strangely peaceful and quiet—Jean's ruddy face, so changed in one day! How hard he had worked—unlike all the others, his, a work of mercy! Jean all his life had been merciful, kind, patient, tender.

And she had not loved him! He was good, but she had not loved him—till now—till she knew the one man, and the other!

A great sob tore up through her breast; tears rained from her eyes. She took his head in her lap and pressed her kisses upon his lips—the first kisses she had ever given him.

"Jean! Jean! Come back to me! Oh, the good God! Let him come back to me!"

One or two wounded stirred and looked at her, moved feebly, and groaned. The agony of her voice

pierced through their dreams. She could see the cut bandage beside him. She stooped and looked at the ghastly wound. The blood had congealed above it; as she moved him a little oozed out. She started, and the life leapt to her face. They say dead men do not bleed.

Was he dead?

In an instant she was on her feet and had run towards a passing surgeon. He came impatiently, and after a moment's hasty scrutiny turned away.

"Dead? No, though next thing to it. The blood has congealed, and saved him. Tie him up and give him a restorative.—Coming, sir; coming!"

She had done what he bade her. She waited in the little, dark chapel, the white figure of the Christ hanging opposite, praying as women pray only once in their lives, and waiting. The château was a mass of smouldering ruins; a red glare in the sky hung above it. Here and there the flames on the thatched roof of the farm-buildings blazed up, then fell. The horrible roar and din of battle was dying down. The Eagle of France was wounded unto death, was broken-winged and dying.

Wellington, standing on the ridge above the Guards, his figure outlined against the sky, had raised his hat with a solemn gesture, the signal for the worn line of heroes to sweep away like a dark cloud over the plain. Napoleon, ghastly white, his chin on his breast, heard the last pealing cry; saw the Old Guard reel and rally, sink back, sway, fall; saw in one awful, blinding moment down into the hell of defeat, tasted the bitter dregs of despair. Waterloo was lost!

But Antoinette waited, heeding nothing of the fate of nations or of kings—waited for Jean to come back, or to drift away.

"Petite!"

The old gentle voice.

She heard the faint whisper, and the color rushed over her face. With a glad cry she stooped and kissed him.

Life thrilled through his veins; he looked up, and read love in her eyes. And love drove back death.

"You do care, *petite!*" he said in faint, tremulous wonder.

"I love you!" Antoinette said. "I love you!"

She waited by his side all night in the chapel, while that awful rout, that *débâcle* after battle, rolled to the very gates of France, battered, beaten. Thousands and thousands of dead were staring up with wide eyes of horror into the starry sky above; all around, on the blood-drenched corn-fields and on the mournful orchards of Hougomont, the dead lay like autumn leaves after a storm.

Chambers's Journal.

In the morning Jean was carried into the farm. The sun shone brilliantly, pitilessly; in the well in the farmyard they were hastily throwing down the dead, French and English, "in one red burial blent."

One there was, with an English coat and a French face, shot through the heart as he leapt from the wall into the ranks of the besieging force in the orchard.

Antoinette did not know that. She only knew that he never returned to Hougomont.

There, under the orchard-trees, whose sweet, frail blossoms fall still above the whitening bones of heroes, she lived to bear Jean children, and to make him happy. He was good, and she loved him. Her old thought had altered a little, that was all.

Ethel F. Heddle.

THE SWISS PEASANT.

Switzerland has well been called the "playground of Europe"; but play is the very last word which one would associate with the life of its hardy sons and daughters who inhabit the mountain districts. It is just to couple the sexes in such a connection as this; for it is a striking characteristic of the rural economy of Switzerland, that the women—the wives, the sisters, the daughters—take upon themselves at least a fair share of the toll which brings to their household food, and clothing, and shelter.

To see the Swiss peasant at his bravest and best, you must follow him where life exerts upon his faculties the strongest pressure, where the struggle for existence is no mere polemical phrase, but a grim and terrible reality,

the vividness, rigor, and relentlessness of which never change from year to year, or from generation to generation. For this purpose it is necessary to leave the beaten track of the conventional tourist, and to seek the regions in which Nature is for the most part met with in wild and unchastened moods. Highland and lowland are indefinite terms in Switzerland, where altitudes which would rank as mountainous in the adjacent countries of France and Germany provoke little or no remark. Thus, to speak of life in Swiss valleys would convey erroneous ideas to the uninitiated mind, unless the warning were given that many of the most populated valleys of the country lie at an elevation of four, five, and six thousand feet above the sea level,

an elevation at which communal life would be barely conceivable in more northerly latitudes. And yet—such is the tenacity of the national character—however near to the eternal snows his lot may be cast, the Swiss peasant accepts his fate without a murmur, and from the most unpropitious conditions and surroundings he wrests life and health by dint of strenuous toil, dauntless perseverance, and unfailing courage.

Hence it is that to Switzerland falls the curious distinction of cultivating grain at the highest known elevation in Europe. This is in the valley of the Vorder-Rhein, running from the Oberalp Pass (6,443 feet high), above Andermatt to Reichenau and Chur (1,935 feet). It is around the mean little wooden village of Tschamut, 5,400 feet above the sea level, that this feat in husbandry is performed. It is, however, only homely rye which is raised—staple food of the peasants of the vale—and at best the saving of the grain is an arduous task. The climate is so inclement for the greater part of the year, and the growing season is so short and precarious, that there is no possibility of ripening the crop in the usual way. For that the sun is too fickle of his favors, and the wind and the rain are too masterful. So the peasants have erected in their fields a novel drying apparatus, which admirably makes up for Nature's insufficiency. At a distance apart of some eighteen feet are placed two stout larch trunks, stripped of their bark, and rising fourteen or sixteen feet high. From these posts lighter poles stretch horizontally from the ground upward at intervals of eighteen inches; and to them the corn is fastened in wisps, thus exposing it to the free action of sun and wind, of which there is generally more of the latter than the former. As one lot is ripened another takes its place, until the whole

of the scanty crop is cleared away, none too soon for the brief autumn of bleak Tschamut.

But valleys like that of the Vorder-Rhein are as Eden itself in fertility, productiveness, and amenity of life, compared with many of the highland regions in which large communities live, and, as a prior condition of so doing, assert control and sway over the froward forces of Nature. Follow the peasants to the "alps" which lie far beyond the reach of either railway or diligence, and a far more vivid idea will be obtained of the stern battle of life which they have perpetually to wage.

A concrete example will bring the facts home to the reader better than any amount of generalization. And first as to the technical meaning of the word "alp." The idea which it most commonly conveys to the mind is that of a peak, more or less inaccessible, whose farthest summits are shrouded in eternal snow; and the idea is right so far as it goes. But to the Swiss peasant the word suggests other and pleasanter associations. His "alps" are the patches of grassland high in the mountains, upon which he can pasture his cattle in summer. These "alps" are scattered all over the mountain ranges, and play a very important part in the agricultural life of the country. For the greater part of the year they are covered with snow, and often these tracts of fresh verdure lie amongst glacier and *Firn*,¹ which are proof against the hottest rays of the August sun, so that, during several months of the year, winter and summer exist side by side.

Typical "alps" are those lying at the head of the Goeschenen Valley (*Goeschenen Thal*), a valley which runs west from the well-known village of Goesch-

¹ The name applied to the glaciers in process of formation out of constant accretions of unmelting snow.

enen, where the St. Gotthard tunnel begins, and through which flows the turbulent River Reuss, fresh from its rise at the foot of the Kehle Glacier, on the way to the Lake of Lucerne. Goeschenen itself is 3,640 feet high; and, by the time you reach the head of the valley—a three hours' march by a rough footway—you are well over 6,000 feet above the sea level. For your pains you are then rewarded by half a mile of plain walking, for, before the valley loses itself in the mountains, it takes the form of a wide plateau, in the centre of which lies the Goeschenen Alp village, a handful of huts of the ordinary Swiss type, clustering round a rude little chapel. Lofty heights soar on every hand, their summits shrouded in ice and snow; and imposing glaciers, not too difficult of access, attest the sternness of the climate. What a life it is which these peasants lead! They have a saying at Maloja that the year is divided in that part of the Engadine into nine months of winter and three months of cold weather; and certain it is that from six to ten feet of snow are no uncommon feature of the landscape there on May Day, while the visitors' season is over long before the fall of the leaf. In the Goeschenen Valley, Nature is even more inhospitable. The summer is far advanced before the snow beats retreat into the hills, and leaves the pastures cold, dead, and water-logged. Yet snow falls quite commonly in June; and if you penetrate the valley in that month you may be sure that the way will carry you through huge snow drifts cut in twain from a height of twelve or sixteen feet, or across miniature avalanches which conveniently bridge for you the foaming river beneath. The husbandry of the valley is of the most restricted kind. The cultivation of corn of any kind is impossible; and even the few roods of potatoes grown are never ripened with-

out difficulty, and sometimes not at all. Gardens are superfluous, for little or nothing would grow in them. A head of lettuce or a miniature onion may be enticed from the niggardly ground by the end of July, but that is all. Grass is grown for the winter fodder; but, though rich and sweet, thanks to the Alpine flora, which redeems the landscape from desolation—for there are no trees save a single hardy stone-pine (the *Arve*)—it is short and stubbly, and is housed in penuriously light crops. Only stern, steely endurance and invincible pertinacity, combined with a spirit of resignation which expects little from life and is thankful for what it gets, enable the brave tollers of the valley to win a bare livelihood from Nature, elsewhere so bountiful in her blessings. No wonder that, though the peasants are nominally the owners of their bits of land, these are heavily mortgaged; so that it is as much as the most resolute of them can do to keep the household together, and at the same time pay the interest on loans contracted long ago by their fathers. There is taxation to bear, but it is light—though on the other hand the service which the State and the cantonal authorities render to this isolated population is limited enough—yet even a little tells upon resources which entirely lack elasticity. The peasants pay dues upon their stock: five francs upon grown cattle, two francs upon young animals, and 75 centimes upon goats. Sheep they do not keep, as being unserviceable where the herbage has to be sought amongst the rocks.

One might expect that the inhabitants of a region like this would easily become victims of the modern mania for migration—that for them the most imposing prospect would be that of the rough footway which leads down into the more fertile lowlands. Such, however, is not the fact. I questioned a peasant on the subject. "Why don't

your young folk go to the towns?" I asked, in sheer curiosity. With a wave of the hand, and a look to the hills, he quickly replied: "*Heimath ist am allerbesten!*" ("Home is best of all!"). It was the true Swiss spirit which spoke here,—the characteristic attachment to the beloved place of birth and upbringing which, in the hardy mountaineer, amounts to a sacred passion. For "*Heimath*" to him means, not the Confederation, not even the canton or the commune to which he happens to belong, but the far-away nook amongst the mountains in which he and his fathers before him first saw the light.

Shut up in their sequestered valley, the peasants have little communication with the outside world; and many of them never go a mile away from year's beginning to year's end. When a death occurs, which is not often, a rude coffin is nailed together by homely yet tender hands, for there is no carpenter or artificer of any kind in the valley, and is carried shoulder high all the long way to Goeschenen, since there is no burial ground nearer. Should such an event happen, however, in winter, when the pass is snowed up, the coffin has to be dispensed with, and the body, covered by a shroud, is placed upon a carrier's "back-saddle" ("*Traggabel*"), and upon the backs of half a dozen strong men, each taking his turn, the weird burden is carried to its last resting place. Nor is medical aid available in the extremities of sickness. Even in child-birth the mother has to trust to nature, and the kindly, if rude, attentions of her neighbors,—doctor, midwife, nurse never penetrate these uncultured heights.

The religious needs of the peasantry are ministered to by a priest of middle age, a man of the people who is able to speak to his simple flock in the uncouth patois of their valley, and to think with them in the thoughts of

their stunted and unimaginative minds. He lives alone in a little house near the chapel, a wooden erection like the rest, with nothing in its exterior to denote that it is the abode of reverence. Calling upon him there, you find him a genial entertainer, ready to converse freely upon the life and character of his humble parishioners, of whose industry, manly fight with poverty, excellent morality, quiet demeanor, and, above all, contentment and happiness, even in the hard lot which is theirs from childhood to age, he cannot speak too highly. "Happiness!" I echoed, as the word left his lips; for the suggestion seemed so incongruous. "Yes, happiness," was the emphatic rejoinder; "for though they are poor, they live healthy and independent lives, and, at the worst, they are better off than the poor of the towns." He is a sort of man-of-all-work, this honest and faithful priest. He christens, he marries, he buries; he admonishes and confesses; he counsels in difficulties and cheers in adversity; he directs the common conscience of the valley, so far as it is troubled by that awkward institution. He is also the schoolmaster: he "rears the tender thought," and "teaches the young idea how to shoot." The curriculum is not elaborate, though the priest saw no reason to apologize for this. "Reading, writing, and summing, with a little geography of Switzerland—that is all we do, but the children need no more."

On the remote Frutt Alp, high above the Melchthal, six hours and six thousand feet by steep track from the south bank of the Lake of Lucerne, the quaint custom of the "Alpine benediction" is still observed. Every evening after dusk, the patriarch of the valley chants a prayer to the hierarchy of heaven, entreating blessing and protection for the peasantry and their homes and chattels. I translate the versified prayer as repeated to me,

though without attempt at rhyme or rhythm:—

O praise, praise! In God's name,
praise!

O praise! praise! In our dear Mother's
name, praise!

May God and the holy Saint Anton,
and Saint Wendel,

And the venerable land-father Brother
Klaus

Protect to-night the dear homes on this
alp!

That is the word, as the dear God
knows well.

Here upon this alp stands a golden
throne:

Therein dwell God and Maria with
their blessed Son.

It is with many graces dowered,
And enshrines the all-holy Trinity.

The first is God the Father,

The second is God the Son,

The third is God the Holy Ghost.
Amen!

Ave! Ave! Ave Maria! Maria, God's
dearest mother!

Jesus, O Lord Jesus Christ! Beloved
Lord Jesus Christ!

Protect soul and honor, body and goods,
And everything that to this alp belongs.

O praise, praise! All that treads and
goes,

In God's name, praise! Ave! Ave! Ave
Maria!

Just a piece of doggerel, it may be,
yet interesting as a picturesque survival of the poetic past!

Decidedly the summer months are for the Swiss peasant the most tolerable part of the year, especially for such of them as migrate with their herds of cattle and goats to the higher "alps" in search of grass. This annual "alpgoing" is quite an event in the quiet annals of rural Switzerland. The date at which the exodus from the valleys takes place naturally varies according to the elevation of the country. It falls in June in some parts, in others it may be late in July. Several "Sennen" may "trek" to the same "alps"; but, arrived there, a common life is lived. They share the same huts, they

sit at the same humble board, their herds graze together, the milk is brought morning and evening to the same dairymen, by them to be promptly scalded and so turned into cheese. The whole business is done on a co-operative basis. Periodical tests of the productivity of the various cattle are made, and, according to the result, are the proceeds divided when the cheese has been sold to the factor at the end of the season. Every few days one of the "Sennen" descends to the valley from his highland home with the produce, which is kept in a warehouse or "lager" to ripen, a process to the perfection of which constant and unremitting attention is necessary. For three or four months, according to the favorableness of the season, these "Sennen" live a nomadic life. Directly the sparse grass has been cleared from one "alp," a move is made still higher or further afield; and here they settle again, until Nature's supplies are once more exhausted, on which fresh herbage is sought elsewhere.

Meanwhile, there is no idleness in the valley below. The summer is short, and into a few weeks have to be crowded a host of duties, the timely and scrupulous performance of which is imperative, if the peasant's household are to meet the inclement weather with stout hearts. From dawn to dark all hands are afield—husband, wife, children. Gaunt men and hollow-breasted women take their turn at the scythe and rake, as, later, at the box-like barrow upon which the dried grass is carried from field to byre. There are gaps to make good in the sod-built fences which divide one holding from another. There is draining to be done, and very primitive it is. There is peat to cut and stack. There are holes to patch in wall and roof of the wooden dwelling. All these things and many others occupy such time as can be spared from the daily routine of the

farm. The boys and girls have their own work to do. Day by day you may see upon the mountain side their small stunted figures, as they bear upon their backs huge loads of small scrub and bilberry roots, which they have torn out of the ground by the help of small three-pronged forks. It is fuel for the coming winter, to be used when the peat runs low. Wood, let me say, is as often as not a great luxury, for it has to be fetched some miles' distance; and that means, not merely man's labor, which is plentiful enough, but money, which is pitifully rare.

A cloud as of some hidden sorrow rests upon these mountain maidens, to whom life brings so little romance, so much wearing, wearying, depressing actuality. Watch that bare-headed lassie, over whose head sixteen or seventeen dull summers have passed, as she struggles with her load. It must weigh at least half a hundred-weight; and how she slings the filled pannier upon her back is a mystery. But she does it, and then, with naked feet, picks her way slowly but surely along the hillside. Reaching her father's hut, the fuel is added to a pile at which she has been working since daybreak. But there is no rest: the empty pannier is shouldered again as at military signal, and she returns to the spot where mother and brothers are tearing up the scrub. Not a bright outlook for girlhood, perhaps, but such is the life of the peasant here! It is work, work, work—for the idle there is no place. Brave little soul, some day a swarthy, sinewy son of the valley will find her beautiful; she will marry and bear children; and so this race of toil and poverty is perpetuated from generation to generation.

But the struggle with Nature takes forms and aspects still more trying to nerve and courage. The peasant has not only to contend with inhospitable seasons, with long drawn-out winters,

and fickle and uncertain summers; in his unequal struggle he is surrounded by forces against which, not merely human foresight and skill, but human life itself count as nothing. For, situated as his home is beneath the snow-capped heights, he is for ever menaced by the avalanche, which, falling perhaps without the slightest warning, is devastating in its effects, undoing in a moment the toil of years or of generations, and bringing desolation and sorrow to homes which, though humble, have been none the less instinct with the spirit of domestic peace and affection. In the midst of the Goeschenen Valley there stands a pathetic memorial. It is a little cross, upon which is fixed a heart-shaped plate bearing this inscription in German:—

Ambrose Kleliger,
16 years old,
came under an avalanche,
1883—R.I.P.

It is Nature's rough way: one life more or less matters little. Yet the story told by these simple words—so laconic, so half-humorously prosaic in their abruptness, the utterance of men who have no time for sentiment—is typical of the life and death struggle which the stout-hearted sons of the mountains have everywhere to wage. No wonder that, in the presence of forces against which they are helpless, forces which ever and anon assert themselves with disastrous and pitiless consequences, the spirit of superstition—which let none deride, since it is, after all, but an undeveloped religious instinct—is strong and powerful. Hence you will see, scattered about the plains and valleys, and even affixed to the dwelling-houses, of Roman Catholic Switzerland, quaint images of saints, and especially of St. Matthew, the protecting saint of all glacial districts, whose aid is thus invoked against the subtle dangers by which life and limb are beset in the regions of ice and snow.

As time passes, however, the Swiss are ceasing to rely solely upon the benevolent disposition of their tutelary saints. It has been found that protection against the avalanche may often be secured without putting faith unnecessarily to the test, and, so to speak, tempting Providence. In many places, as at the foot of the Furka Pass, near Realp, stone and earth-works have been built with a view to staying the course of a falling avalanche, or at least of diverting its course into indifferent channels; while, elsewhere, forests have been planted on a large scale for the same purpose.

It may be said, that such a picture of peasant life as has here been drawn is a depressing and sombre one, a picture whose heavy shadows are unrelieved by the sun-shafts of healthy human gaiety and joy. And yet even a life like this has, if not positive compensations, at least its redeeming ameliorations. Thrown upon each

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other by the arduous conditions of their lot, cast together in a common struggle with adverse forces, there is developed amongst the Swiss peasants an elevated spirit of fraternity and helpfulness which, sooner or later, stands each and all in good stead; the very rigor of their existence fertilizes mutual sympathy, and draws from characters, rude and severe as the rocks which overhang their dwellings, those virtues which knit communities together and invest social life with dignity, benignity, and charm. The amenities of civilization, the fair fruits of culture, the softening influences of a large and full life—these things are not for the peasant mountaineer; but, thrown upon Nature as he is, he learns to know the common mother in all her changing moods, and to love her not less because the food and raiment which he receives at her hand are not a proffered gift but a wrested trophy.

William Harbutt Dawson.

LYCHGATE HALL.

A ROMANCE.

BY M. E. FRANCIS.

CHAPTER XXVII.

I AM ROBBED IN BAX WOOD.

By sunset on the evening of this, the tenth day of my journey, I thought my goal in sight: a few more miles would bring me to the Blue Lion, where I was to meet my man. I forded the river a little below Tiverton, and pursuing the tactics I had of late adopted, proceeded by a bridle-path which followed the banks of the river. Before very long we came to a very pretty wood, and I mind noticing as I trotted along how the ruddy evening light fell upon the boles of the trees, and how, here and there, I caught glimpses of

a red and purple sky behind the naked branches.

I could have sung aloud for joy that my mission was so near accomplished, and that Chestnut and I had comported ourselves so well; and as we advanced I fell to imagining the reception I was like to receive on my return. With what gratitude Mrs. Dorothy would press my hand, how she would commend my faithful service and Chestnut's speed and endurance; how eagerly my Parents would question me, what importance I should present in their eyes—above all, what a hero Patty would think me!

I was smiling to myself and actually

repeating aloud some foolish words I meant to say to her when, of a sudden, my horse made a violent swerve, and the next moment was thrown back upon his haunches. A light flashed in my face, and, before I had time to recover from my astonishment, was immediately extinguished. Almost simultaneously a horseman leaped out upon me from the shelter of the trees—indeed I should have bethought me of the danger of journeying in so leisurely a fashion through such a place—in a moment I saw the rim of a pistol within a foot of my face, and I was seized so violently by the throat as to be well-nigh throttled. The other fellow, he who carried the lantern, was meanwhile clutching Chestnut's bridle and forcing him backwards amongst the undergrowth.

It was so dark that I could scarce distinguish the forms of my assailants; indeed in the surprise of the attack I thought little of identifying them, but only how I could best guard my trust; and it hardly struck me as strange that not a word was said on either side, not even the customary, "Stand and deliver!" or, "Your Money or your Life!" I kicked Chestnut sharply, hoping to make him overthrow the footpad, and at the same moment knocked up the pistol with my cudgel, the thought flashing across me as I did so, that the other fellow would certainly fire upon me now, and that all my efforts to protect my treasure would be in vain.

He did not shoot, however, but abandoning his tactics loosed his hold of Chestnut's reins, and while I was struggling with my mounted opponent he nipped round my horse and with a sudden dexterous twist wrenched the cudgel from my hand. My wrist hung nerveless for the moment, but with my left hand I whipped out Dorothy's little pistol and shot at the horseman as he pressed upon me. I made sure I hit him for I heard a muttered word,

"S'ddeath!" But indeed the bullet was so small it might have passed through him without doing any serious hurt. I had no time for further resistance, for almost simultaneously with my futile attempt to dispose of the one assailant, my downfall was accomplished by the other. I vow the fellow was not only as strong as a giant but as nimble as a cat. He caught me round the waist with his great sinewy arms, and my poor distracted Chestnut plunging violently at the same time, I was dragged from the saddle and thrown upon the road.

The big man knelt upon and well-nigh suffocated me, while the other, dismounting, searched rapidly in my pockets and in my bosom.

"Sir," groaned I, "yonder goes my horse; 'tis the best beast that ever stepped, and my own. You may have him as a free gift if you will but let me go; for I am bound on important business concerning other folks and not myself."

'Twas very simple of me to have made such a speech, and the highwaymen might well have answered that they would have my money and my horse too, and that I might be thankful for my life; but they said never a word at all, only the horseman paused a moment in his search, and then, turning to his comrade, made a sign with his hand. The other raising himself a little reached for his lantern, jerking up the slide so that the light flashed forth again. I was pinioned too fast to struggle, but I ceased not to beseech, and to protest, and finally to threaten; with ever-increasing anger I tried to take note of their appearance so that I might know them again, and if possible bring them to justice. They were both masked and wore their hats drawn down over their brows. The horseman was habited in black and was much more slender in form than his companion, who, I observed, wore

a gray frock, the common dress of country folks, as Mrs. Dorothy had said.

Meanwhile the horseman's hands continued to be busy about my person. Long and slender they were, and curiously white but strong as steel. At last, my shirt being torn apart, my treasure lay revealed, and in a moment was snatched from my keeping.

"What must I do, Master?" said the giant, speaking for the first time.

The other bent forward, answering in so low a whisper that though I strained my ears I could not catch a word. Then mounting he rode off at a gallop.

The other man still sat upon my chest, and pinioned my arms to my sides, though I protested loudly that since they had taken all I had he might in common justice let me go.

Of a sudden and quite unexpectedly he released me and sprang to his feet, and before I had time to follow suit had thrown himself upon Chestnut, who, faithful beast, had not hitherto deserted me for all his fright. But now, maddened by the blows which the usurping rider rained upon him, he set off at a furious pace, and presently I heard a loud plunge and splash—the wretch had forced him into the river. I found my feet at last and, catching up the lantern, ran staggering in the direction they had taken, crying aloud as I went like a madman. I had lost everything—my treasure—my honor—and my horse. I well-nigh think the last seemed to me the greatest calamity of all, for though I would cheerfully have given him—aye, and my life itself—in defence of my sacred trust, that he should be thus robbed from me who had been already doubly stripped was unendurable. Then that they should strike him, the noble, high-spirited fellow, who had never known whip or spur!—I choked with rage so that I could scarce find breath enough to hasten on my way.

I emerged from the wood at last and found myself in a very dreary and solitary lane, with the river running between me and the high road. Here, proceeding more slowly, and examining the track by the aid of my lantern, I began to search for the place where my poor Chestnut had been forced into the river.

Half-unconsciously, for indeed I scarce knew what I did, I called out his name, and of a sudden, while I was thus engaged, I heard a great splashing a little way off, and straightening myself and raising my light I beheld, to my intense joy, my beloved horse swimming towards me.

Dropping my lantern on the river bank, I shouted aloud—I believe I wept—I know I called to him again in so broken a voice that the poor beast must have found it hard work to recognize it. And when he landed I flung my arms about his dripping neck and kissed him, and fairly danced with joy.

But presently, becoming sober again and even sad, and recalling what I must conscientiously hold a greater loss, I began to consider what I must next do, and to ask myself if it were possible to take any steps to recover the notes of which I had been rifled. Judging from the pace at which the mounted highwayman had departed, it would be worse than useless to urge my tired horse in pursuit of him. There was nothing for it, it seemed to me, but to make my way to the Blue Lion and there await Mrs. Dorothy's messenger, who might perchance be able to advise me.

I mounted, therefore, and putting Chestnut to as brisk a trot as he was capable of, found myself before very long at the hostelry in question.

'Twas a comfortable place of great repute in that part of the world, and under other circumstances I had been cheered by its aspect; but now I entered the bar with an air no doubt as

doleful as were my spirits, and summoned the Landlord in as melancholy a voice, as though I meant to bid him to my own funeral. But before I had had time to unfold him my sorry plight, I was startled by a great thump on the shoulder, and turning round angrily, for I was in no mood to brook familiarity from strangers, I caught sight of no less a person than Sir Jocelyn Gillibrand himself.

"Luke Wright, by all that's strange!" cried he. "What wind blows you hither, my lad?"

And—"Eh, your Honor!" ejaculated I, "who'd ha' thought of lighting on you so far from home?"

"Why," returned he, with a darkening face, "when a man would fain explore, there's nothing like going to the fountain head. Track a river to its source, my lad, if you would know whence the stream comes. But what adventure brings you here?"

"Oh, Sir Jocelyn," cried I with a groan, the memory of my woes returning upon me, "you may well talk about adventures, for I would fain ha' been without. I have been robbed," I cried, wringing my hands, "robbed in a great wood some miles from here, and all I had took from me. The ruffians even stole my horse, but he came back to me again, though he had to swim the river."

"'Twas Bax Wood, I reckon," cried the Landlord eagerly; he and many more had gathered round to listen to my tale. "I'll go warrant the rogues were hid in the caves there. They used to be much favored by such gentry—aye, they've sheltered many a bad character, even in my time. You'd have a chance o' catching the rascals very like if you was to go back to look for 'em," he added excitedly.

"But I heard 'em ride off," I returned gloomily. "One of 'em was mounted on a splendid horse and galloped off Exeter way, and the other,

who was on foot when they first beset me, crossed the river on my horse. I know not by what chance it was the poor beast managed to get back to me."

"Well," said the Landlord, scratching his head, "if they be gone, they be gone; but for all that it might be worth your while to search them caves. They might ha' gone back to 'em when they thought you out of the way," he added, ruminatively—"very like they would, for in times past Bax Wood caves was as good as a lodging-house to highway robbers and such like. It do seem a strange thing now," he went on, scratching his chin pensively, "as you should be set upon like that, young Master. We haven't a-had a robber on the high road here this many years now. Nay, not since the French Devil was hanged at Heavtree ten or eleven year ago. Did you ever hear of the French Devil, Sir?" he asked, turning to Sir Jocelyn.

"Not I," returned Sir Jocelyn, "there be devils enough common to all nations, but I never heard of a French one in particular."

"Well, they called him the French Devil," resumed the Landlord in an explanatory tone, "because he was thought to ha' come over in a French fishing smack; aye, and often when he shot his man he'd out wi' some strange word, 'Morbloo' or some such thing, and in complexion he was as black as your Honor's self—craving your Honor's pardon. But I myself reckon he came from—his own place, for there was no knowin' where to have him; one day here, another there, and he'd no more respect for the Quality than the common folk, and 'ud as lief rob a Bishop as a farmer."

"Well, but they hanged him, you say," said Sir Jocelyn impatiently, "so he's disposed of. They must be clever folks in these parts to catch and hang a Devil."

"Dear, to be sure! Yes, Sir, they hanged him right enough, and his skeleton might long be seen swinging at the cross-roads 'twixt here and Heavitree; folks used to go miles round to avoid passing near the place. 'Twas thought he was as wicked a customer dead as alive, and brought ill luck to all who went a-nigh him. But this year the bones was spirited away—all in a minute, so to speak—there one day and gone the next. As like as not his Master had come and fetched him—and a good job too! I've no likin' for such folks, and I'm sorry to hear there's more of 'em about; for if ye believe me, your Honor, they do a deal of harm to an honest house. The Quality do push on to the big towns instead of baiting at a quiet place like this; and the poor bodies won't stop to have more nor a glass or two, for fear of being overtaken when they be in liquor."

"Come, enough prattle," interrupted Sir Jocelyn. "What say you, Luke? Are we to go and explore these caves?"

"Well, if I was you I'd go and have a look, Sirs," put in the Host, and the bystanders took up the cry warmly.

In spite of the Landlord's condemnation of highway robbers I had some doubts of his sincerity in the matter; and I looked appealingly at Sir Jocelyn, fearing to be despatched on a fool's errand. I had often heard that the country folk favored these gentlemen of the road, who were indeed frequently good-natured and generous with other folk's money, and were, moreover, rollicking, jovial, dare-devil fellows; and I thought the proposed expedition might be designed to put me off the scent. But Sir Jocelyn clapped me on the back again, and declared he would ride forth with me that minute.

"Let us have fresh horses, Landlord," cried he, "for ours are weary. We shall want four of 'em, for myself and

my two servants and this young man; and pray let us have a capable guide who may conduct us to these caves."

"Is it worth while, think you?" said I despondingly. "Might it not be better for me to ride at once to Exeter and make my complaint there?"

"And let the rascals get clear away meanwhile?" retorted he. "No, indeed! Come, let us start at once—we can at least explore these hiding-places, and if we draw a blank we may yet come upon their tracks. The footpad at least cannot have proceeded so very far."

"I am truly grateful to your Honor," I returned, "for your kindness in helping me, and I agree 'tis best to set out at once. By the way," said I, turning to mine host, "should a man come asking for me here will you have the kindness to keep him until I return? His name is John Dewey. A country fellow," said I, with as casual an air as I could assume, "I have a little business to transact with him."

"Ah, to be sure, I know him well; he is an honest lad and like to do well in the world, they say. His Mother was woman to a Lady of Quality, and —"

But at this moment mine host was interrupted by the entrance of the ostler, who desired to know which horses should be got ready for the expedition.

During the bustle which ensued, Sir Jocelyn turned to me and again inquired the object of my journey, speaking with the same impatient air I had already noticed.

"'Tis surely new," he added, with a sneer, "that you should be so well worth robbing."

"Oh, Sir Jocelyn," cried I, much agitated, "'tis no money o' mine—you may be sure of that. 'Tis a large sum in bank notes which, by Mrs. Ullathorne's order, I was to deliver over to her messenger here for the payment

of some debts of hers. I think no harm of telling you this much, which is indeed all that I know myself; though by her wish the matter is to be kept as secret as may be."

"So!" said Sir Jocelyn, under his breath, "more mysteries! You are honored indeed, Luke, to have such confidence placed in you."

And thereupon he fell to pacing the room moodily.

"Nay, but am I not disgraced," I cried piteously, "not to have guarded my trust better? But they were two against me, and though I swear I cared little for their pistols—indeed I had liefer they had shot me—how could I contrive to hold my own against them once they got me down?"

"How, indeed?" he answered absently. "But courage, Luke! We'll track the rascals yet and bring them to justice. I have all but succeeded in my quest," he added with a fierce laugh, "and my company should bring you luck."

We had but just time to swallow a morsel of food before word came that the horses were ready; upon which, mounting in all haste, we set forth upon our search.

The moon had now risen, but being in its last quarter gave not much light. One of the folks from the inn, however, carried a lantern and moreover knew the road well enough to have guided us in the dark; the horses were fresh, the air tingling cold, and, in spite of my anxiety and weariness, I could not help enjoying the swift ride into the night.

In an incredibly short time, as it seemed, we reached Bax Wood, and here Sir Jocelyn called a halt.

"Now," said he, "since we are so numerous a company" (we were six or seven, I think) "I propose that two or three who know the place should go forward quietly to reconnoitre; and the rest of us must hold ourselves in readi-

ness to hasten to their assistance as soon as they have marked the quarry. 'Twere better to surprise than scare these gentry."

The Landlord's Son, who had volunteered to act as our chief guide, and two others from the inn, dismounted, leaving their horses in charge of Sir Jocelyn's servants; and taking with them the lantern which, however, they were careful to close, disappeared among the trees. We could hear their feet rustling among the dry leaves, a twig now and then snapping; but it was too dark to watch their progress.

In a moment or two all was still save for the creaking of our saddles, with the quick breathing of our horses, which we had indeed pushed to their topmost speed, an occasional stamp of a hoof, the sigh of the wind through the leafless boughs—these slight sounds intensified the stillness and seemed to quicken our almost breathless expectation. All at once we heard a shout and then another, and then the rush of feet apparently hurrying along the path by which our scouts had disappeared; and presently the light of the lantern flashed out among the trees, bobbing hither and thither amid a struggling mass of advancing figures.

"They've got one of 'em anyhow!" cried Sir Jocelyn, raising himself in his stirrups. "Run and help them, somebody! The fellow seems to be fighting hard."

I sprang from my horse, throwing the reins to the man nearest me, and rushed to meet the group. By the unsteady light I could just make out a tall, burly figure who, pinioned and half-throttled though he was, was still making a gallant fight with knees and elbows in the endeavor to release himself. One glance showed me that he was masked and that the color of his coat was gray. In an instant I had thrown myself upon him; and shouting

and huzzaing, and it must be owned swearing not a little, his captors soon reduced him to helplessness. In another moment his hands were bound tightly behind him, and two of the stoutest of his conquerors, taking each an arm, prepared to drag him towards the rest of our party, when the fellow, catching sight of me, cried out earnestly for a word with me before the matter went further. All his fierceness seemed to have deserted him, and he spoke in so lamentable a tone that my heart had been touched had I not been so wroth with him.

"Speak with you indeed!" cried I. "Where is my money, sirrah? I doubt your comrade has carried it off far enough out of my reach. Nay, but I'll have justice done on you since I have caught you. In Exeter Gaol shall you lodge this night!"

"Aye, aye!" cried one of the inn folks. "And swing before the month is out, very like."

The wretched creature groaned, and again turned his masked face towards me, imploring me to speak with him.

I stepped towards him and bent my head to his mouth.

"Put you hand into my breast, Master," whispered he, "and you will find the money there safe enough—all the notes—every one. I—I meant not such harm as you think. Oh, Sir, speak a word for me! Hark ye!" Throwing back his head he paused for a minute, and I could see his eyes gleam through his mask, and then advancing his lips he said very slowly: "*Where have I fallen? What have I done?*"

"*What?*" cried I, hardly able to believe my ears, for the words were those by which I myself should have tested Mrs. Dorothy's messenger.

"Listen again, Master," gasped he, and immediately gave the countersign, "*What is true is safe.*"

Searching in his bosom as he had

directed I easily found the notes, and was beginning to count them when, at a shout from the road, the men, eager to show their prisoner, took hold of him again and hauled him away before I had time to assure myself that I had indeed secured all I had lost.

They had pushed me on one side; but I hastened in their wake, dizzy with astonishment. How could this be? Who could have tampered with one on whose fidelity Mrs Ullathorne placed such implicit reliance? Poor wretch! Well, since he had restored my money I would willingly let him go.

But I reckoned without Sir Jocelyn, who was, as I have said, in a savage mood that night. The prisoner was searched by his orders and unmasked roughly enough; and while by the light of the lantern I counted the notes, which he had had the precaution to divest of their wrapper, the others crowded round to stare at their luckless captive.

And then—"Why, it is John Dewey!" cried one. "John Dewey, as I am a living sinner! La! John, however came 'ee to be led away like this?"

"Oh, I can't tell!" returned poor John, with a sob. "'Tis the first time I ever meddled w^t anything o' the kind. Pray, pray let me go! Young Master has got his money and nobody's the worse. Let me go, Sir, and I'll swear —"

"Not so fast!" cried Sir Jocelyn sternly. "How came the money in your possession when, according to this young man's account, your comrade rode away with it? We'll hold you fast, my lad, till we catch your crony. He can't be far off, I'm certain. Let us search the wood, boys, and find out if this Gentleman is not lying concealed somewhere."

Thereupon honest John Dewey—I must een call him so, for in spite of his recent doings I protest I never saw a more open countenance than that dark,

scared one of his—honest John Dewey, I say, immediately uplifted his voice and sent out a great cry into the darkness.

London Times.

"Look to yourself!" shouted John Dewey.

(To be continued.)

LIFE'S LITTLE DIFFICULTIES.

THE LOIN OF PORK.

I.

Mrs. Chillingham Bull, of "The Chev-lots," Little Wickling, to Mr. Henry Ings, Butcher, of Little Wickling.

(By hand.)

Mrs. Chillingham Bull finding that her friendly verbal message by her butler to Mr. Ings concerning the nuisance caused by his persistent killing of pigs at the time when she and her household are at family prayers has had no effect, she now informs him that she intends to take measures to stop the obnoxious practice.

Sept. 28.

II.

Mr. Henry Ings to Mrs. Chillingham Bull.

(By hand.)

Mrs. Chillingham Bull,

Dear Madam,—It is my wish to kill pigs as quietly as possible, not only to cause as little nuisance as I can, but also out of regard to my own and Mrs. Ings's feelings, both of us being sensitive too. The pig which was killed this morning at the time you name in your favor of even date was specially ordered by Sir Cloudesley Scrubbs, and could not be kept back owing to its being market day at Boxton and my killer having to be there.

I am, yours obediently,

Sept. 28.

Henry Ings.

III.

Mrs. Chillingham Bull to Sir Cloudesley Scrubbs.

(By hand.)

Dear Sir Cloudesley,—I am sorry to trouble you, but you must put the blame upon my desire to suppress a growing nuisance in our otherwise peaceful village. Ings, the butcher, has contracted the disagreeable habit of killing his pigs between 8.30 and 9, the very time at which we have family prayers, and you cannot conceive how discordant and heart-rending are the screams that reach our ears across the lawn at that time. Perks remonstrated with him some time ago, and we thought the matter over; but this morning it broke out again with renewed violence, and on my sending a peremptory note Ings says that the pig was killed at that hour by your instructions. I shall be glad to hear from you that you repudiate the responsibility.

Yours sincerely,

Sept. 28. Adela Chillingham Bull.

IV.

Sir Cloudesley Scrubbs to Mrs. Chillingham Bull.

(By hand.)

Dear Mrs. Chillingham Bull,—It is quite true that I ordered the pig, as we are expecting friends who are partial to pork. But I specified no time

for its demise, least of all that half-hour in which you perform your devotions. Ings, who is the most civil of men, surely must mean that he understood I was in a hurry, and therefore killed the pig directly the post came in. Believe me, dear Mrs. Chillingham Bull,

Yours very truly,

Vincent Cloudesley Scrubbs.

Sept. 28.

V.

Mrs Chillingham Bull to Mr. Ings.

(By hand.)

Mrs Chillingham Bull, having made enquiries of Sir Cloudesley Scrubbs, finds that Mr. Ings was quite mistaken in thinking there was any need for the killing of the pig to occur when it did, and after what has happened she intends to remove her custom to a Boxton butcher as a mark of her displeasure.

Sept. 28.

VI.

Mr. Ings to Mrs. Chillingham Bull.

(By hand.)

Mr. Ings presents his compliments to Mrs. Chillingham Bull, and begs to enclose his account of £18 5s. 6½d., immediate payment of which would oblige. He also wishes to give notice that the next time he catches any of Mrs. Chillingham Bull's fowls in his garden (notice of same having previously been given, and a stoppage of the nuisance promised) he intends to wring its neck.

Sept. 28.

VII.

Mrs. Chillingham Bull to Sir Cloudesley Scrubbs.

(By hand.)

Dear Sir Cloudesley,—I hasten to send you the enclosed offensive missive from Ings, in response to one from me saying that I could not deal with

him any more. I think that you will see the matter in the same light that I do. In such cases neighbors must stand by each other for mutual protection and the harmony of life.

Yours sincerely,

Sept. 28. Adela Chillingham Bull.

VIII.

Sir Cloudesley Scrubbs to Mrs. Chillingham Bull.

(By hand.)

Dear Mrs. Chillingham Bull,—With every desire in the world to oblige you I do not see my way, as you seem to suggest, to cease to deal with Ings. For one thing we like the quality of his meat; for another—and you must pardon my frankness—I cannot consider that he has shown anything more objectionable than an independent spirit. You say nothing about the fowls, which he seems to look upon as a grievance at any rate not more imaginary than the pig-killing. Believe me, dear Mrs. Chillingham Bull,

Yours very truly,

Vincent Cloudesley Scrubbs.

Sept. 28.

IX.

Mrs. Chillingham Bull to Sir Cloudesley Scrubbs.

(By hand.)

Dear Sir Cloudesley,—I am sincerely pained at the view which you take. I cannot see what can come of village life if, as I said before, we do not stand by each other. Ings has been most rude to me, and he must be brought to his senses.

Yours truly,

Sept. 28. Adela Chillingham Bull.

X.

Mrs. Chillingham Bull to Mr. Blades, Butcher, Boxton.

Will Mr. Blades please send to Mrs.

Chillingham Bull to-morrow morning a fore-quarter of lamb and a wing-rib of beef?

Sept. 28.

XI.

Mr. Perks to Mr. Blades.

Dear Sir,—Mrs. Chillingham Bull, of The Cheviots, Little Wickling, having decided to change her butcher, and having begun to send you orders, I thought it interesting to let you know that it was by my advice that her choice fell on you.

Yours truly,

Oct. 1. Henry Perks.

XII.

Mrs. Chillingham Bull to Mr. Blades.

Mrs. Chillingham Bull is very dissatisfied both with the quality of Mr. Blades's meat and the excessive proportion of bone and suet to which her attention has been called by her butler. Unless an improvement occurs she will have to change her butcher.

Oct. 5.

XIII.

Mrs. Chillingham Bull to Mr. Earwaker,
Butcher, Boxton.

Will Mr. Earwaker please send to Mrs. Chillingham Bull to-morrow morning a leg of mutton and a sirloin of beef?

Oct. 10.

XIV.

Mr. Perks to Mr. Earwaker.

Dear Sir,—Mrs. Chillingham Bull, of The Cheviots, Little Wickling, having decided to change her butcher, and having begun to send you orders, I thought it interesting to let you know that it was by my advice that the choice fell on you.

Oct. 12.

Yours truly,
Henry Perks.

XV.

Mrs. Chillingham Bull to Mr. Earwaker.

Mrs. Chillingham Bull is very dissatisfied both with the quality of Mr. Earwaker's meat and the excessive proportion of bone and suet to which her attention has been drawn by her butler. Unless an improvement occurs she will have to change her butcher.

Oct. 15.

XVI.

Mrs. Chillingham Bull to the Rev. Dr. Baylham.

Dear Rector,—I am sorry you are away from home, because there is a little difficulty in the village which can be settled only by yourself. Mr. Pipes, though his sermons are irreproachable, and he is most kind, has not the needful tact.

To make a long story short, your petted churchwarden Ings, a few weeks ago, was very rude to me and I had to take away our custom. The Boxton butchers are, however, very bad, and on thinking it over I am inclined to pardon Ings, but I am afraid from the attitude which he took up that he may not accept my forgiveness in the spirit in which it is offered; which would, of course, be very unfortunate and wholly inimical to the harmony of village life. I therefore write to ask you if you would write to him.

Perks, who is much distressed about it all, tells me that we shall never have good meat from the other butchers, and he is continually urging me to return to Ings. Will you not, dear Rector, once more prove yourself the Little Wickling mediator?

Your grateful friend,
Adela Chillingham Bull.

P.S.—I hope you are enjoying Cham-onix. I was there with my dear husband in 1885.

Oct. 17.

XVII.

Dr. Basil Baylham to the Rev. Gregory Pipes.

Dear Pipes,—Our friend at The Chev-
lots seems to have done something to
offend poor Ings, with the result that
that good man has been abandoned in
favor of the Boxton trade. Knowing
both as we do, there can be little doubt
as to where the fault lies. Mrs. Bull
writes to me asking for my mediation,
because, although her spirit is willing
to continue the fray, the flesh is weak,
and recollections of Ings' excellent
fillets seem to be crowding appetizing-
ly upon her, as she struggles with the

Punch.

Boxton gristle. I leave the solution to
you with perfect confidence.

Yours,

Oct. 20.

B. B.

XVIII.

Mr. Henry Ings to Mrs. Chillingham
Bull.

Received with thanks cheque for £18
5s. 7d. Stamp.

Oct. 22.

Henry Ings.

XIX.

Mrs. Chillingham Bull to Mr. Ings.
Understanding from her butler that
Mr. Ings has recently killed a pig, Mrs.
Chillingham Bull would be glad if Mr.
Ings would send her a loin of pork.
Oct. 22.

BOOKS AND AUTHORS.

In "A Nation's Idol," Charles Felton
Pidgin makes Benjamin Franklin the
central figure of a historical romance
in which two young lovers, heirs to an
oldtime Kentucky feud, play prominent
parts. The period selected is that of
Franklin's diplomatic mission to the
Court of France, and young people who
enjoy such blending of fact and fiction
will find the book readable, though it
will not repeat the success of Quincy
Adams Sawyer. Henry Altemus Co.

Though it is almost fifty years now
since Charles Kingsley dedicated to
his children, "Rose, Maurice and Mary,
A Little Present of Old Greek Fairy
Tales," "The Heroes" is still one of the
most fascinating books available for
children, if they are properly intro-
duced to it, and the charm of its style
adapts it especially for reading aloud to
them. Among the crowd of ephemeral
juveniles, it is always a pleasure to
meet a classic like this, in fresh and
attractive dress. E. P. Dutton & Co.
publish a holiday edition, this season,

on heavy, gilt-edged paper, with six
color plates and seventy half-tone illus-
trations by T. H. Robinson.

The "Chuggins" of H. Irving Han-
cock's slender volume is a sturdy little
runaway who attaches himself to the
American army before Santiago, and
does his boy's best there. His story
is simply and realistically told, and will
interest the readers for whom it is
designed. The Henry Altemus Co. il-
lustrate it attractively. "A Little
Rough Rider," from the same house, is
not another hero of the Cuban war, as
might be guessed, but a small circus-
girl, who turns to the ring for support
during her father's disappearance in
the California mines. Her experiences
in crossing the plains with an emigrant
train, reaching San Francisco when the
gold-fever is at its height, add variety
to the narrative. Tudor Jenks is the
author.

"Susan Clegg and her friend Mrs.
Lathrop" have had a great run since

they made their *début* before the magazine-public, a year ago, and there are admirers who predict that their vogue will rival Mrs. Wiggs's of cabbage-patch fame. Gathered into book form, these character-sketches remind one more in manner and subject of "Josiah Allen's Wife," so popular fifteen years back. Some of them are very funny, so funny that one must leave one's comfortable seat on the instant and go in search of a listener for them. But in others, the fun is carried a little over the line, and becomes forced and flat, coarse, even. It is a pity that a writer with talent so uncommon as that of the lady who signs herself "Anne Warner" should not use the blue pencil more carefully on her manuscript. Little, Brown & Co.

Under the title "Where does the Sky Begin?" Dr. Washington Gladden presents nineteen sermons, which are pervaded by a fine spiritual imagination and directed by a helpful purpose. His thought, as expressed in the discourse which gives the book its title, is that the sky does not begin far away, but in the dust of the pavement, in the roots of the grass, at the threshold of the lips which drink its life and at the portals of the eyes which receive its messages of light. In other words, he holds that there is no real boundary between the sky and the world, between the spiritual and the natural, between the things unseen and the things seen, between the next life and this, between eternity and time. He follows this thought along many lines, and enforces it in many ways but always cheerfully and sympathetically. (Houghton, Mifflin & Co.)

A young surgeon who deserts his San Francisco practice for a year of rest and re-invigoration on a Sierra Nevada fruit-ranch is the ostensible hero of

Alice Prescott Smith's new novel, "Off the Highway," but its central character is really Mr. Cavendish, the preacher of the scattered settlement. Sunny-hearted and simple as a child, and limited almost as a child in his knowledge of the world, his eager nature has been generously developed by the reading and reflection which his solitude allows, and the impression which he makes on the shrewd men of the world with whom a chance trip to the city brings him into contact is strikingly portrayed. The chapters which describe the call of the San Francisco church to him appeal to emotions not often touched by current fiction. Two romances and a mystery supply the lighter interest of a story quite out of the common, and the California setting adds to its charm. Houghton, Mifflin & Co.

Lovers of art owe a debt of gratitude to Julia Cartwright (Mrs. Ady) for her study of the life and works of the great painter of the Florentine Renaissance, Sandro Botticelli, which E. P. Dutton & Co. publish in a quarto volume. This work is an expansion of a slighter sketch by the same writer, published a year ago. The author shows herself capable of understanding and of treating sympathetically not only Botticelli's art but his engaging personality, his high ideals and his religious enthusiasms. She combines accordingly biography with criticism, and gives us the figure of the great painter with an historic background and in its relations to the religion and politics of Florence in the fifteenth century. Botticelli enjoyed the appreciation of his contemporaries, but it was his fate to be almost forgotten for four hundred years, and, so far as the English-speaking world is concerned, to remain obscure until he was discovered by Ruskin and his unique attractiveness described in glowing yet discriminating

words. The present volume is charmingly written. It is well-proportioned, and has sufficient but not superabundant detail. Illustrated with more than forty full page plates and nearly as many smaller engravings scattered through the text, it is as attractive a volume as the season has produced.

"The Sea-Wolf" of Jack London's much-discussed story is Wolf Larsen, captain of the schooner *Ghost* bound for the Alaskan seal-fisheries, a man of giant strength, self-taught and widely read, of daring intellect, delighting in abstract speculation, absolutely without belief in man, god or devil, and absolutely unhindered by any sense of dread or duty from carrying out his own caprices to whatever extreme of cruelty or lust. "Not immoral but unmoral," as the writer distinguishes, he is described in some moods as a lonely, sombre being, akin in ambition and despair to Milton's Satan; in others as a monster of unimaginable brutality. The restraints of civilization have made it almost impossible for such an individuality to find scope; Mr. London has chosen the best environment available for it, but even his ingenuity will still leave many readers unconvinced. He makes the narrator of his story a dilettante young fellow, picked up from a shipwreck by the *Ghost*, detained on board her, against his will, by one of her captain's whims, and driven to work his way as cook's boy, and, later, mate. There is a superabundance of gory detail, and the introduction of the feminine interest is hackneyed, but the nautical passages are in the author's best manner, and as a story of adventure the book will have its success. Of its merits as a psychological study there will be all shades of opinion. The Macmillan Co.

Edited with scrupulous delicacy by their recipient, "The Letters of John Ruskin to Charles Elliot Norton" are yet of intense interest in their disclosure of personality. Some of them have already appeared in "The Atlantic Monthly," but the two volumes which come now from Houghton, Mifflin & Co. include much fresh material. The letters are arranged in chronological order, with no attempt at biography, except for an explanatory note here and there, and the effect is to give, as Professor Norton says, "an irregular narrative of a friendship with which neither difference of temperament nor wide and frequent divergence of opinion had power to interfere." Beginning in 1855, when Ruskin was in his thirty-seventh year, had published "Seven Lamps of Architecture," and "Stones of Venice," and was at work on the third and fourth volumes of "Modern Painters," they end only with the total wreck of his health, no other series of his letters extending over so long a period unbroken. His drawing-classes at the Workingmen's College, his prodigious toll in arranging the Turners in the National Gallery; his attitude toward the Civil War in America; his studies in Italy; his lectures at Oxford; his ardent discussions of ethics and political economy; his purpose in his various publications; his relations to his father and mother, to the Brownings, William Morris, Carlyle, Froude and Darwin; his ventures into Spiritualism—there is abundance of fascinating detail on points like these. But the absorbing interest is always personal—"the tragic record of the perplexities of a great and generous soul, the trouble of a tender heart, the spendthrift use and at last the failure of exceptional powers."

A VIOLIN.

Music of shadow, blown from twilit
lands,
Where never burns the fierce white
light of day.
Where never laughter breaks their sad-
nesses;
Only a sapphire dusk and sombre sky,
And wandering mourning winds that
blow across
The everlasting sorrowing of the sea.
The sobbing cadences aspire and sink,
And in their gliding poignant beauty
speaks
Anguish of all the ages. Shadowed
forms,
Figures of tragedy, who lift pale hands
and cry
Against the ruthless trampling of the
years,
Keen from the strings, until the listen-
ing
Becomes a very rapier thrust of pain.

F. O'Neill Gallagher.

HARVEST SONG.

["The tall millet crops have nearly all been harvested, and a better field of fire over the flat plains is thus secured."—"Morning Post," September 22nd, 1904.

East and West the Mother calls—
"Come, my children, to the feast,
In my low-roofed Western halls,
Under high domes of the East.

I have spread on hill and dale
Golden cloth of corn and wheat,
Harvests that shall never fail,
Garment that no moth can fret.

I have strung my purple beads
On the necklace of the vine;
I have hung my silver seeds
Like the lamps about a shrine.

I have laid the straining root
To my heart below the clay;
I have held the mellow fruit
To the crimson cheek of day.

I have charmed the fetid pools
Till they rocked by feathered rice;

And the worms have been my tools,
And the morsels of the ice.

I have conjured from the sod
Of the steppes, enchanted grain;
And far off, the river god
Has for pipes my sugar cane.

I have forced a precious yield
From the shades of Egypt's tombs;
On Manchuria's yellow field
I have tossed my millet plumes."

East and West the Mother calls—
"Come my children to the feast
In my latest banquet halls
Of the sunrise—in the East!"

East and West the children come
Proudly with uplifted head.
To the hum of battle drum
Thus they scorn the Mother's bread -

"From the clouded mountain tops,
From the valleys of the main,
Lo! a store of goodlier crops
That shall clothe your empty plain.

By the hillside and the gorge,
For your cloth of tarnished gold,
As it fell from Vulcan's forge
See the sheet of steel unrolled.

You have wept and waited long
In the darkness out of sight,
But our harvest tall and strong
Shall be raised up in a night.

For harmonious shepherd's pipe
We shall have a war god's lyre,
He will reap the increase ripe
With the sickle of his fire.

Gently were your sheaves laid low,
Like the sighing of a breeze
But our sturdier growth shall go
With the crash of forest trees.

We will string your purple beads,
Drops from hearts that proudly die;
And our flowers of mighty deeds
Shall be crimson as the sky."

"Children, hush!" the mother sighs
For their harvest lost and vain—
"Where the tree falls there it lies,
But my harvests come again."

Eleanor Alexander.

The Spectator.